



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: PW/Flood Control
Department No.: 054
For Agenda Of: December 6, 2022
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time:
Continued Item: No
If Yes, date from:
Vote Required: Majority

TO: Board of Directors, Flood Control and Water Conservation District
FROM: Department Scott D. McGolpin, Public Works Director, (805) 568-3010
Director(s)
Contact Info: Walter Rubalcava, Deputy Director-Water Resources, (805) 568-3436
SUBJECT: 2022 Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Modification Plan - First and
Second Supervisorial Districts

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 the 2022 Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Modification 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, that no substantial changes are proposed to the project and there is no new information regarding new significant impacts or feasible mitigation, and that therefore no new environmental document is required pursuant to State California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Sections 15162 and 15168(c)(2);
- b) Consider the previously-certified Program Environmental Impact Report (01-EIR-01) and PEIR Addenda, and determine that the PEIR Addenda contained within the 2022 Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Modification 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 2022 Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Modification Plan; and
- d) Approve the individual projects described in the 2022 Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Modification Plan.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda in order to approve the 2022 Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Modification Plan (DBMMP) see Attachment A, which includes projects defined within the scope of impacts identified by the Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for Routine Flood Control Maintenance Activities (Attachment B).

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 Debris Basin Plan was updated in 2017 and approved along with a PEIR Addendum by the Board of Directors. Following the Thomas Fire and 1/9/18 debris flow, the District prepared an additional updated Debris Basin Plan and PEIR Addendum, which was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2021. The current 2022 DBMMP includes some changes and updates to the PEIR and previous Addenda to include more detailed design revisions for San Ysidro Debris Basin and Cold Springs Debris Basin, which are scheduled for modification in 2023. The 2022 Updated DBMMP provides more specific detail on the project proposals at these sites; all of the impacts and mitigation measures fall within the scope of the previously adopted PEIR and Addenda.

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 modifications, 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 2022 Updated DBMMP was circulated to interested parties and agencies on September 28, 2022. No comments were received.

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 modifications. The District is in the process of finalizing permits from the RWQCB and CDFW, expected in 2022

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 improves fish-passage performance and allows 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 PEIR for Routine Maintenance which was originally approved in 1992 and subsequently updated in 2001.

The first Debris Basin Maintenance Plan, tiered off the PEIR, was written in 1996 and updated in 2003. 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 ACOE, 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, a federally listed endangered species. The B.O. includes special provisions for the District to modify five debris basins over a period of 10 years. The five debris basins selected for modification are Maria Ygnacio Main Branch Debris Basin, Maria Ygnacio East Branch Debris Basin, Romero Debris Basin, San Ysidro Debris Basin, and Cold Springs Debris Basin. The 2017 and 2021 updates to the Debris Basin Plan further refine the maintenance of the debris basins and include modification plans for the five identified debris basins.

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 reduction in necessary maintenance of the modified basins.

Currently, two basins (Maria Ygnacio Main Branch and East Branch) have already been successfully modified; while the modification at Romero Basin is underway. The 2022 Updated DBMMP contains minor site-specific revisions to the remaining two debris basin modification projects at Cold Springs and San Ysidro Basins.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Narrative:

The costs associated with the work identified in the 2022 Updated DBMMP are included in the FY 2022/23 budget under the Water Resources Division of the Public Works Department as shown on page 424 in the budget book. There are no General Fund monies associated with this plan.

Attachments:

Attachment A: 2022 Updated Debris Basin Maintenance and Modification Plan

Attachment B: 2001 Program EIR for the Updated Routine Maintenance Program

Authored by:

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