



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: August 18, 2020
Placement: Administrative
Estimated Time: N/A
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: Thomas D. Fayram, Deputy Public Works Director, (805) 568-3436

SUBJECT: Final Environmental Impact Report for the Randall Road Debris Basin, First Supervisorial District

County Counsel Concurrence

As to form: Yes

Other Concurrence: N/A

Auditor-Controller Concurrence

As to form: N/A

Recommended Actions:

That the Board of Directors:

- a) Adopt the Final Environmental Impact Report, SCH No. 2019029104, (Attachment 1) for the Randall Road Debris Basin which has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA);
- b) Certify that the Board has reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final Environmental Impact Report, SCH No. 2019029104, as well as information presented during the public hearing prior to the approval of the project, and adopt the California Environmental Quality Act Findings (Attachment 2);
- c) Approve the Randall Road Debris Basin identified as the preferred alternative (Proposed Project) in the Final Environmental Impact Report, SCH No. 2019029104; and
- d) Adopt the preferred project description (Proposed Project) and associated mitigation measures, with their corresponding monitoring requirements, as the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Attachment 3) for this project.

Summary Text:

This item is on the agenda to approve the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Randall Road Debris Basin; make Findings under CEQA; and approve the preferred project alternative and associated mitigation measures as the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

This project consists of the construction and long-term periodic maintenance of a new debris basin on San Ysidro Creek to capture sediment and debris transported from the watershed upstream of the project site. The project objectives are to maximize coarse sediment and debris retention to address post-fire storm events and to minimize debris basin maintenance requirements.

The District has prepared a Final EIR pursuant to Sections 15120 and 15160 of the State Guidelines for the Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the County of Santa Barbara Guidelines for the Implementation of CEQA. No Class 1 (significant and unavoidable) impacts are identified in the EIR. Significant but mitigable impacts (Class 2) are anticipated in the following areas: Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Noise, Transportation and Traffic. The CEQA Findings (Attachment 2) and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Attachment 3) summarize the impacts and associated mitigation measures.

Public/Regulatory Outreach

The District released a Notice of Preparation (NOP) on February 14, 2019, which started the State Clearinghouse 30-day public comment period and corresponded with the 30-day local comment period. The NOP was sent to regulatory agencies, interested parties and organizations, as well as every residence within 1000 feet of the project area. The NOP invited written comments on the scope and content of the EIR. A public scoping meeting was also held on February 26, 2019 to describe the proposed Project concepts and the environmental review process, and to obtain input on the preliminary project concepts and scope of the EIR. Staff considered the comment letters and verbal comments received during the scoping meeting when preparing the Draft EIR. Public comments generated from the NOP are included as an appendix in the EIR.

The District held a public design workshop on November 4, 2019. Regulatory agencies were invited, and most attended, along with members of the public. The design workshop included additional question-and-answer discussions and comment solicitation.

The District released the Draft EIR on May 4, 2020, which started the State Clearinghouse and local 45-day review period. Notices of document availability and Environmental Hearing date with associated Zoom meeting instructions were posted in the Santa Barbara News Press and Montecito Journal, and sent to regulatory agencies and interested parties, as well as to every residence within 1000 feet of the project area. The District held the Environmental Hearing on May 20, 2020 online using Zoom technology to receive verbal comments on the Draft EIR. The State Clearinghouse review period ended on June 19, 2020 and local review period ended on June 22, 2020.

Several comment letters were received and comments were accepted verbally during the Environmental Hearing. Staff considered the comments; and the comment letters and responses are included in Section 9 of the EIR. Changes to the text of the EIR are shown in underline (additions) and strikeout (deletions) in the Final EIR.

Background:

San Ysidro Creek originates in the Santa Ynez Mountains and runs through several developed neighborhoods. The upper watershed was severely burned during the 2017-18 Thomas Fire. The devastating debris flow that followed in January 2018 resulted in damage and destruction of many properties, public infrastructure, and natural habitats in the watershed and nearby.

The proposed Project involves construction of a new debris basin and associated flood-control facilities along San Ysidro Creek channel in Montecito. The proposed debris basin near Randall Road would reduce potential flooding and debris flow impacts at Highway 192 and downstream infrastructure and properties.

The proposed Project components include:

- Excavation of an off-channel basin alongside San Ysidro Creek, designed to receive flows and debris above the 5-year event.
- Creek channel improvements as needed to re-contour steep eroded creek banks, while retaining the existing creek alignment and bottom width
- Debris racks within the basin to trap debris
- Native plant restoration along the creek channel, surrounding the perimeter of the basin, and along Highway 192.
- Closing Randall Road to private vehicle access and allowing a public trail and small parking area for public usage.
- Access lanes for maintenance and emergency vehicles
- Long term maintenance of the basin as a flood control facility, which involves
 - Periodic vegetation maintenance within San Ysidro Creek Channel
 - Excavation of accumulated material after major flood events and/or wildfires
 - Irrigation upkeep and maintenance of the native plant restoration for 2-5 years until plants are established.

Fiscal and Facilities Impacts:

Budgeted: Yes

Fiscal Analysis:

Narrative:

Costs for this EIR were included in the Adopted FY 2020-21 budget in the Water Resources Division of the Public Works Department as shown on page D-332 budget book. No General Fund money was used for this project.

Special Instructions:

Direct the Clerk of the Board to email a copy of the minute order of these actions to clopez@cosbpw.net.

Attachments:

Attachment 1 - Proposed Final EIR (SCH No. 2019029104)

Attachment 2 - CEQA Findings for the Proposed Final EIR

Attachment 3 - Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Authored by:

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