

## **PROPOSED FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

Septage Treatment System Improvement Project for the La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians  
La Jolla Reservation, Pauma Valley, San Diego County, California

### **PROPOSED ACTION**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is considering authorizing the award of approximately \$300,000 in grant funds to the La Jolla Band of Luiseño Indians (Tribe) for construction of the La Jolla Septage Treatment System Improvement Project. The proposed project would replace an existing unlined septage pond (evaporation pond) that treats septic tank and portable toilet septage with a larger and more advanced septage treatment facility.

### **PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE PROPOSED PROJECT**

The purpose and need of the proposed project is to protect public health and increase sanitary conditions on the Reservation by replacing an undersized and unlined evaporation pond used for the disposal of septage with a larger, more efficient and sanitary septage treatment facility. The existing pond overflowed in 1993 during a period of unusually heavy rainfall. Other purposes of the proposed project are to efficiently utilize the Tribe's resources and support an on-site wastewater management plan that would replace the current practice of responding to septic failures only.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES**

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), an Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared to examine the environmental impacts of the proposed project on Land Resources, Water Resources, Air Quality, Living Resources, Cultural Resources, Socioeconomic Conditions and Environmental Justice, Resource Use Patterns, and Other Values for Sound and Noise, Public Health and Safety, and Visual Resources/Aesthetics.

The EA found that the proposed project has "no anticipated impacts" or "potentially beneficial impacts" to Land Resources, Living Resources, Cultural Resources, Socioeconomic Conditions and Environmental Justice, Resource Use Patterns, and Other Values for Sound and Noise and Visual Resources/Aesthetics.

The EA found that the project "needs mitigation" to minimize potential adverse impacts to the following resources to a less than significant level: Water Resources, Air Resources, and Public Health and Safety. Detailed impact analyses are contained in the EA, and a summary of potential impacts and required mitigation measures is provided below.

#### **Water Resources**

The proposed project will disturb approximately 2.0 acres. To minimize potential impacts from stormwater erosion, a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will be prepared and Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be implemented, in accordance with EPA's National

Pollutant Discharge Elimination System general permit. BMPs may consist of the use of swales, detention basins, hay bales, straw waddles, silt curtains, and gravel bags, as well as hydroseeding and the preservation of vegetated buffers between areas of excavation and stream channels.

### Air Resources

For the most part, project impacts to air quality will be limited to construction activities and will consist of emissions from gas and diesel engines in construction trucks and equipment, as well as dust (PM<sub>10</sub>) associated with trenching and earth moving activities. The Tribe will implement standard dust control measures, such as minimization of exposed areas, watering of exposed dirt areas, 15 mph speed limits for construction vehicles on dirt roads, cessation of construction activities if wind speeds exceed 25 mph, and hydroseeding of disturbed areas following construction. Long term impacts to air quality will be limited to the gasoline-powered emergency generation, which will not represent a significant air quality impact due to its infrequent operation.

### Public Health and Safety

Construction activities will comply with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards. Trash would be separated from the septage through a screening process at the time of disposal. This trash would be placed in an onsite dumpster for disposal in a local landfill.

## **CONCLUSION**

The EA did not identify any significant and unmitigated environmental impacts resulting from the implementation of the proposed EPA funded project. Consequently, EPA has made the preliminary decision to prepare this Finding of No Significant Impact (FNSI) and not to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement.

## **PUBLIC REVIEW**

The EA is on file and is available for public inspection at the EPA Region 9 office at 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA. To make an appointment to review the EA at this office or to obtain additional information about the project, please contact Linda Reeves at (415) 972-3445. Copies of the EA are also available for public review at the La Jolla Tribal Office, 22000 Highway 76, Pauma Valley, CA, between the hours of xxx and xxx Monday through Friday.

Interested persons may submit comments to EPA within 30 calendar days from the date the Notice of Availability is published in the newspaper. No administrative action will be taken by EPA on the proposed project prior to the expiration of this comment period. Comments should be: (1) mailed to Linda Reeves, U.S. EPA (WTR-10), 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94150; (2) faxed to Linda Reeves at (415) 947-3537; or, (3) e-mailed to [reeves.linda@epa.gov](mailto:reeves.linda@epa.gov).

After EPA assesses any comments received, those comments, EPA's responses, and this

FNSI will be forwarded to the EPA Regional Administrator for review and signature. If this FNSI is signed by the Regional Administration, it will not be re-circulated for review but will be available to any individual upon request.

## **FINDING**

After review of the EA and any comments received, EPA has determined that the proposed project will not have significant and unmitigated environmental impacts and that an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared for this project.

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Wayne Nastri  
Regional Administrator

Date