



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Region 9

75 Hawthorne Street

San Francisco, California 94105-3901

Mail Code: WTR-4

**DRAFT FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
City of San Joaquin Wastewater Treatment Facility**

PROJECT LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is considering awarding \$485,000 of federal grant funds to the City of San Joaquin (City) to expand the capacity of their wastewater treatment facility (WWTF) from 0.252 million gallons per day (mgd) to 0.50 mgd. The treatment process will be changed from an aerated basin with sedimentation and percolation/evaporation ponds to a fine bubble system with integrated clarifier and percolation/evaporation ponds. The City is required to expand the WWTF to meet the Waste Discharge Requirements for the facility adopted by the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board for both capacity and quality of treated effluent. The proposed system will achieve the removal of biochemical oxygen demand (BOD5) and total suspended solids (TSS) needed to comply with the Waste Discharge Requirements. The WWTF must remove 80% or attain an effluent concentration of 40 mg/l (whichever is more restrictive), of both TSS and BOD5.

The construction elements of the proposed project include new, adequately sized pipelines, meters, and other critical hydraulic appurtenances. Additionally, the proposed project includes new oxidation ditch facilities, construction of an additional pond, and the deepening of two existing oxidation ditches. To increase the WWTF's capacity, the proposed project will also include "extended aeration-type" of activated sludge process which includes longer hydraulic and solids retention times to produce high quality effluent and stable sludge. The aeration system will be mechanical so that wastewater is aerated as it circulates around a basin.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and EPA NEPA regulations found at 40 CFR Part 6, EPA has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA), attached herein, dated July 2010, to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed action. The EA includes a discussion of alternatives considered, including the no action alternative. Based on information from the EA, public discussion of the proposed project, and consultation with other agencies, the EPA has determined the action will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment.

Environmental Factors Considered

Four alternatives were considered for the proposed project: the proposed action, the no action alternative, the aerated lagoon treatment alternative, and the no extended aeration process alternative. These alternatives are described in the EA. Evaluating the proposed alternative, we found no significant impacts, but several unavoidable impacts, namely the acquisition of important farmland, decreased groundwater recharge caused by the loss of irrigated farmland, increased transportation of biosolids, and increased energy use associated with the addition of

pumps and other equipment at the expanded WWTF. These impacts and their mitigation measures appear in the EA.

Public Review

The EA is available for public review at the web site: <http://www.epa.gov/region09/nepa/epa-generated.html> and at the offices of EPA Region 9 at 75 Hawthorne Street, San Francisco, CA 94105-3901. Contact Charlotte Ely at (415) 972-3731 or via e-mail at ely.charlotte@epa.gov. Copies of the EA are also available for review at the offices of City of San Joaquin at 21900 Colorado Boulevard, San Joaquin, CA 93660. Contact Cruz Ramos at (559) 693-2193 or via e-mail at cruzramos@kermantel.net.

EPA must receive comments on the draft FONSI by August 21st, 2010. EPA will take no administrative action on the above-described project prior to expiration of this comment period. Comments should be mailed to:

Charlotte Ely
U. S. EPA Region 9
75 Hawthorne Street (WTR-4)
San Francisco, CA, 94105-3901

or faxed to Ms. Ely at 415-947-3537.

After EPA assesses any comments received, those comments, EPA's responses and this FONSI will be forwarded to the Water Division Director for review and signature. If this draft FONSI is signed by the Water Division Director, it will not be re-circulated for review, but will be available to any individual upon request.