



Moulton Niguel Water District

STAFF REPORT

TO: Board of Directors **MEETING DATE:** April 13, 2015

FROM: Marc Serna, Director of Engineering and Operations
Rod Woods, Principal Engineer

SUBJECT: Recycled Water System Extension Initial Study

DIVISION: 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7

SUMMARY:

Issue: Staff has finalized the Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Recycled Water Extension Project 2014.011.

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Board of Directors approve the resolution entitled, "Approving the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program for the Recycled Water System Extension Project 2014.011."

Fiscal Impact: Project No. 2014.011 is currently budgeted in Fund 12, Water Supply Reliability with a current project budget of \$3,080,000. In addition, a grant in the amount of \$500,000 is anticipated from the California Department of Water Resources, Proposition 84. Costs expended to date for the project are \$58,465 for design and environmental services.

BACKGROUND:

The South Orange County Watershed Management Area submitted a joint 2014 IRWM Drought Grant Proposal to the California Department of Water Resources, Division of Integrated Regional Water Management Financial Assistance Branch for Proposition 84 funding. The Grant Proposal addresses drought impacts on the region by implementing recycled water system expansion projects in Moulton Niguel Water District (MNWD), Santa Margarita Water District (SMWD), and South Coast Water District (SCWD) service areas.

MNWD's Project will provide up to 102 acre-feet per year of recycled water in lieu of potable water to 12 recycled services in the Laguna Audubon HOA and 20 other

#12.

Recycled Water System Extension Initial Study

April 13, 2015

Page 2 of 3

recycled services at various locations in the Cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Niguel. In addition to these 32 recycled water services, the Project will also install about 7,500 feet of 8-inch, 6-inch, and 4-inch diameter recycled water pipelines within the Cities of Laguna Hills, Aliso Viejo, Laguna Niguel and Laguna Hills.

On November 14, 2014, the California Department of Water Resources sent a conditional commitment letter which will result in \$500,000 Proposition 84 grant to MNWD (SMWD and SCWD will also receive separate grants of \$500,000 each).

In anticipation of the commitment letter, MNWD solicited proposals in October 2014 for engineering design and environmental services for MNWD's project. Engineering design services are currently being performed by Tetra Tech under the On-Call Professional Engineering Services for Capital Improvement Program Work Implementation Agreement. Environmental services were performed by Sophia Mitchell & Associates.

DISCUSSION:

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines, the notice of intent to adopt the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Recycled Water Extension Project 2014.011 was published in the Orange County Register on February 3, 2015, for a thirty (30) day public review period. The MND was also sent to the State Clearinghouse on February 3, 2015, for processing.

The public review period ended on March 5, 2015, and comments were received from:

- The State Clearinghouse (one comment letter from the State Water Resources Control Board and one comment letter from the California Department of Transportation District 12)
- The State Water Resources Control Board (duplicate letter sent to the State Clearinghouse)
- The California Department of Transportation District 12 (duplicate letter sent to the State Clearinghouse)
- The City of Laguna Hills

The response to the comments from these entities are included in the Final MND provided as an attachment to this staff report. The key findings from the MND include:

- No findings of potential significance were found as a result of the proposed project.
- The proposed project would have less than significant impacts or no impacts on the following areas: aesthetics, agriculture resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gas emissions, hazards and hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality, mineral

Recycled Water System Extension Initial Study

April 13, 2015

Page 3 of 3

resources, noise, population and housing, public services, recreation, transportation and traffic, and utilities and service systems.

- Two of these areas require mitigation measures in order to keep impacts to less than significant (biological resources and geology and soils).
- The mitigation measures include:
 - MM-BIO-1A (Least Bell's Vireo)- noise monitoring, possible survey, and possible noise attenuation pending timing of construction
 - MM-BIO-1B (California Coastal Gnatcatcher)- noise monitoring, possible survey, and possible noise attenuation pending timing of construction
 - MM-BIO-2 (Migratory Bird Treaty Act)- nesting bird survey pending timing of construction; possible buffer required
 - MM-BIO-3 (Wetlands)- installation of construction fencing and training for avoidance
 - MM-GEO-1 (Geofabric on Canyon Wren Lane)- protection of existing geofabric along a portion of Canyon Wren Lane

Attachments:

1. Resolution approving the Mitigated Negative Declaration and the Mitigation, Monitoring, and Reporting Program for the Recycled Water System Extension Project 2014.011.
2. Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Recycled Water Extension Project

RESOLUTION NO. 15-____

**RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT
APPROVING THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION AND THE
MITIGATION, MONITORING, AND REPORTING PROGRAM FOR
THE RECYCLED WATER SYSTEM EXTENSION PROJECT
(MNWD PROJECT 2014.011)**

WHEREAS, the South Orange County Watershed Management Area submitted a joint 2014 Integrated Regional Water Management Drought Grant Proposal to the California Department of Water Resources, Division of Integrated Regional Water Management Financial Assistance Branch;

WHEREAS, the Grant Proposal addresses drought impacts on the region through implementing recycled water system expansion projects by the Moulton Niguel Water District, Santa Margarita Water District, and South Coast Water District;

WHEREAS, the Moulton Niguel Water District (“District”) has proposed a project (“Project”) that will provide up to 102 acre-feet per year of recycled water in lieu of potable water to 12 recycled services in the Laguna Audubon HOA and 20 other recycled services at various locations in the Cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Niguel;

WHEREAS, in addition to these 32 recycled water services, the Project will also install about 7,500 feet of 8-inch, 6-inch, and 4-inch recycled water pipelines;

WHEREAS, the Project is more particularly described in the Mitigated Negative Declaration prepared for the Project, entitled “Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Recycled Water System Extension Project” dated March 2015 (“Final MND”), which is on-file at the District’s Administrative Office and available on request;

WHEREAS, the Final MND is incorporated in this Resolution by this reference;

WHEREAS, the District, acting as lead agency as defined in Section 21067 of the Public Resources Code, undertook the preparation of an “Initial Study” and draft mitigated negative declaration (“IS/MND”) for the Project;

WHEREAS, the District circulated the draft IS/MND, by way of a Notice of Intent to Adopt Mitigated Negative Declaration (“NOI”), for an extended public review period commencing on February 3, 2015, through and including March 5, 2015, in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and related regulations as set forth in Section 15105 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (“CEQA Guidelines”);

#12.

WHEREAS, the draft IS/MND and NOI for the Project were circulated both to the public and affected governmental agencies for review and comment, and all comments have been received and considered;

WHEREAS, the District published the NOI in *The Orange County Register* on February 3, 2015;

WHEREAS, the Project, as set forth and described in the Final MND, includes those “Mitigation Measures” necessary to ensure the identified potentially significant environmental effects of the Project remain at less than significant levels (“Mitigation Measures”);

WHEREAS, the Final MND includes a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (“MMRP”), which is set forth in Section 4.0 of the Final MND;

WHEREAS, the District has determined based on the Initial Study, which is incorporated within the Final MND, that the potentially significant impacts resulting from the construction and operation of the Project will be reduced to a level below significance because of the Mitigation Measures that have been incorporated into the Project, and based thereon, the District has prepared the Final MND in accordance with the requirements of the CEQA;

WHEREAS, the District’s Board of Directors (“Board”) has determined that the Final MND, along with the MMRP, are adequate, complete, and have been prepared in accordance with CEQA, and reflect the Board’s independent judgment and analysis;

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed and considered all written and oral comments made to the District in connection with the Project and the Final MND by affected governmental agencies and other interested persons and responded, as appropriate, to comments received; and

WHEREAS, the Final MND and all supporting materials, which constitute a record of these proceedings, are kept at the District’s operations offices, located at 26161 Gordon Road, Laguna Hills, California 92653, under the care and control of the Engineering Department.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Board of Directors of the Moulton Niguel Water District does hereby **RESOLVE, DETERMINE** and **ORDER** as follows:

Section 1. Each of the recitals set forth above is true and correct and incorporated in this Resolution.

Section 2. The Final MND for the Project, inclusive of the MMRP contained therein, is adequate and in compliance with CEQA.

Section 3. The Final MND reflects the Board’s independent judgment and analysis.

Section 4. The Board has considered all comments received in regard to the Project.

Section 5. The Board hereby finds that there is no substantial evidence that the

Project, with the incorporated Mitigation Measures and the MMRP, will have a significant impact on the environment, based on the whole of the record before the Board including, but not limited to, the IS/MND and comments received relative to the Project and IS/MND.

Section 6. The Board hereby approves and adopts the Final MND for the Project, inclusive of the MMRP set forth therein.

Section 7. The Board hereby approves the Project.

Section 8. The Board hereby delegates authority to the District’s General Manager, or her designee, to take any action reasonably required to cause a Notice of Determination to be filed with the Orange County Clerk and the State Clearinghouse including, but not limited to, the issuance of payment of those Fish and Game fees that may be required pursuant to Fish and Game Code Section 711.4.

Section 9. The Final MND and all supporting materials, which constitute a record of these proceedings, will be kept at the District’s operations offices, located at 26161 Gordon Road, Laguna Hills, California 92653, under the care and control of the Engineering Department.

APPROVED, ADOPTED and SIGNED this 16th day of April, 2015.

MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT

By: _____
President
MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT
and of the Board of Directors thereof

By: _____
Secretary
MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT
and of the Board of Directors thereof

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

BOWIE, ARNESON, WILES & GIANNONE
Legal Counsel - THE DISTRICT

By _____
Patricia B. Giannone

**Final Initial Study and
Mitigated Negative Declaration**

**Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM)
Recycled Water System Extension Project**

March 2015

Prepared for:

Moulton Niguel Water District

Prepared by:

Sophia Mitchell & Associates

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY1-1

2.0 CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS.....2-1

 2.1 REVISED AND SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT..... 2-1

3.0 RESPONSE TO WRITTEN COMMENTS.....3-1

4.0 MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM4-1

Tables

Table 3-1. Comment Letters – IRWM Recycled Water System Extension 3-1

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY

This Final Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) as amended (Public Resources Code Section 21000 *et seq.*) and the *CEQA Guidelines* (California Administrative Code Section 15000 *et seq.*).

CEQA Guidelines Section 15074(b) and (d) state:

“(b) Prior to approving a project, the decision-making body of the lead agency shall consider the proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration together with any comments received during the public review process. The decision-making body shall adopt the proposed negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration only if it finds on the basis of the whole record before it (including the initial study and any comments received), that there is no substantial evidence that the project will have a significant effect on the environment and that the negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration reflects the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis.”

“(d) When adopting a mitigated negative declaration, the lead agency shall also adopt a program for reporting on or monitoring the changes which it has either required in the project or made a condition of approval to mitigate or avoid significant environmental effects.”

In accordance with this requirement, the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Recycled Water System Extension Project IS/MND is comprised of the following:

- Draft Initial Study and Mitigated Negative Declaration, February 2015 (SCH No. 2015021010);
- This Final IS/MND document, March 2015, that incorporates the information required by §15074 (included in this document); and
- A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (included in this document).

Format of the Final IS/MND

This document is organized as follows:

Section 1.0 Introduction and Summary

This section describes CEQA requirements and content of this Final IS/MND.

Section 2.0 Corrections and Additions

This section provides a list of those revisions made to the Draft IS/MND text as a result of comments received and/or errors and omissions discovered subsequent to release of the Draft IS/MND for public review.

1.0 Introduction and Summary

Section 3.0 Response to Written Comments

This section provides copies of the comment letters received on the Draft IS/MND and individual responses to written comments.

Section 4.0 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

This section provides a program of monitoring or reporting to ensure that the provisions or revisions are complied with during implementation of the project.

2.0 CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS

This section contains revisions to information included in the Draft IS/MND (February 2015) based upon additional or revised information required to prepare a response to a specific comment. Please see copies of the letters and responses in Section 3.0, Response to Written Comments, of this Final IS/MND, as applicable.

2.1 REVISED AND SUPPLEMENTAL TEXT

The following table summarizes the changes to the Draft IS/MND. These changes were based upon public comments on the Draft IS/MND. There are no changes in the environmental analysis conclusions and there are no changes to the mitigation measures.

Pages	IS/MND Section	Summary of Change
9	Project Description	Requirements added for Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway) per the request of the City of Laguna Hills. These requirements include timing of the proposed work and also specific requirements for repaving.
10	Project Description	Clarified in Table 2 that notification to NAHC needs to occur within 24 hours.
38	Cultural Resources	Cultural resource report preparer information added. Date of record search for cultural resources added. Date of cultural resources field work added.
39	Cultural Resources	Clarified that notification to NAHC needs to occur within 24 hours.
40	Geology/Soils	Clarification on why the project would not have an impact as it relates to rupture of earthquake faults and seismic ground shaking.

2.0 Corrections and Additions

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3.0 RESPONSE TO WRITTEN COMMENTS

Section 3.0 contains responses to all comment letters received on the February 2015 Draft IS/MND. A total of three comment letters were received during the comment period, which closed March 5, 2015 (Table 3-1).

Table 3-1. Comment Letters – IRWM Recycled Water System Extension

Number	Letter Preparer	Date
1	Office of Planning and Research – State Clearinghouse	3/6/15
2	Caltrans	2/27/15
3	State Water Resources Control Board	2/13/15
4	City of Laguna Hills	3/3/15

3.0 Response to Written Comments

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3.0 Response to Written Comments



EDMUND G. BROWN JR.
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE of PLANNING AND RESEARCH
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AND PLANNING UNIT



KEN ALEX
DIRECTOR

March 6, 2015

Rodney S. Woods
Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Subject: Integrated Regional Water Management Recycled Water System Extension Project
SCH#: 2015021010

Dear Rodney S. Woods:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Mitigated Negative Declaration to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on March 4, 2015, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Director, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures
cc: Resources Agency

1400 10th Street P.O. Box 3044 Sacramento, California 95812-3044
(916) 445-0613 FAX (916) 323-3018 www.opr.ca.gov

3.0 Response to Written Comments

Document Details Report State Clearinghouse Data Base

SCH# 2015021010
Project Title Integrated Regional Water Management Recycled Water System Extension Project
Lead Agency Moulton Niguel Water District

Type MND Mitigated Negative Declaration
Description The project is the installation of approximately 7,500 feet of PVC pipe within paved streets ranging from 4 to 8 inches in diameter. The proposed recycled water pipelines will provide up to 102.3 acre-feet per year of recycled water in lieu of potable water to 32 services. A total of 32 recycled water meters will also be installed and will be connected to adjacent water mains by 2-inch laterals. The recycled water system extension is proposed in MNWD's service area. Four segments are in the City of Aliso Viejo, two segments are in the City of Laguna Hills and two segments are in the City of Laguna Niguel.

Lead Agency Contact

Name Rodney S. Woods
Agency Moulton Niguel Water District
Phone 949 425 3547 **Fax**
email
Address 27500 La Paz Road
City Laguna Niguel **State** CA **Zip** 92677

Project Location

County Orange
City Laguna Hills, Laguna Niguel
Region
Lat / Long
Cross Streets Multiple locations
Parcel No. Multiple locations
Township **Range** **Section** **Base**

Proximity to:

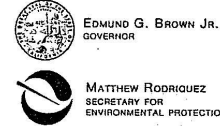
Highways SR 73, 133, I-5
Airports
Railways SCRRA
Waterways Multiple
Schools Crown Valley ES and Kinder Care
Land Use Various

Project Issues Biological Resources; Public Services; Vegetation

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Department of Conservation; Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 5; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 12; Air Resources Board; State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Drinking Water; State Water Resources Control Board, Division of Financial Assistance; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 8; Native American Heritage Commission; Public Utilities Commission

Date Received 02/03/2015 **Start of Review** 02/03/2015 **End of Review** 03/04/2015

Note: Blanks in data fields result from insufficient information provided by lead agency.



State Water Resources Control Board

FEB 13 2015

Rodney S. Woods, P.E.
Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

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3/4/15
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Dear Mr. Woods:

INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (IS/MND) FOR MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT (DISTRICT); INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT (IRWMM) RECYCLED WATER SYSTEM EXTENSION PROJECT (PROJECT); ORANGE COUNTY; STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2015021010

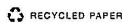
We understand that the District may be pursuing Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) financing for this Project. As a funding agency and a state agency with jurisdiction by law to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) is providing the following information and comments for the environmental document prepared for the Project.

The State Water Board, Division of Financial Assistance, is responsible for administering the CWSRF Program. The primary purpose for the CWSRF Program is to implement the Clean Water Act and various state laws by providing financial assistance for wastewater treatment facilities necessary to prevent water pollution, recycle water, correct nonpoint source and storm drainage pollution problems, provide for estuary enhancement, and thereby protect and promote health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the state. The CWSRF Program provides low-interest funding equal to one-half of the most recent State General Obligation Bond Rates with a 30-year term. Applications are accepted and processed continuously. Please refer to the State Water Board's CWSRF website at: www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/srf/index.shtml.

The CWSRF Program is partially funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and requires additional "California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)-Plus" environmental documentation and review. Three enclosures are included that further explain the CWSRF Program environmental review process and the additional federal requirements. For the complete environmental application package please visit: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/srf/srf_forms.shtml. The State Water Board is required to consult directly with agencies responsible for implementing federal environmental laws and regulations. Any environmental issues raised by federal agencies or their representatives will need to be resolved prior to State Water Board approval of a CWSRF financing commitment for the proposed Project. For further information on the CWSRF Program, please contact Mr. Ahmad Kashkoli, at (916) 341-5855.

FELICIA MARCUS, CHAIR | THOMAS HOWARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 | Mailing Address: P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, Ca 95812-0100 | www.waterboards.ca.gov



3.0 Response to Written Comments

- 3 -

- C. Protection of Wetlands: Identify any portion of the proposed Project area that should be evaluated for wetlands or United States waters delineation by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), or requires a permit from the USACE, and identify the status of coordination with the USACE.
- D. Compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act: Identify whether the Project will result in the conversion of farmland. State the status of farmland (Prime, Unique, or Local Statewide Importance) in the Project area and determine if this area is under a Williamson Act Contract.
- E. Compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act: List any birds protected under this act that may be impacted by the Project and identify conservation measures to minimize impacts.
- F. Compliance with the Flood Plain Management Act: Identify whether or not the Project is in a Flood Management Zone and include a copy of the Federal Emergency Management Agency flood zone maps for the area.
- G. Compliance with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act: Identify whether or not any Wild and Scenic Rivers would be potentially impacted by the Project and include conservation measures to minimize such impacts.

Following are specific comments on the District's draft IS/MND:

1. On pages 10 and 39 of the report, it states "If the Orange County coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be contacted within a reasonable timeframe." However, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that the NAHC be contacted by phone within 24 hours of the discovery of Native American human remains. Please change the above mentioned sentences to reflect what is required by the Health and Safety Code.
2. If pursuing CWSRF funding for the Project, please include a table/list of all the special status species (identified by the USFWS, the California Natural Diversity Database, and the California Native Plant Society) with a potential to occur in the area in the Biological Resources Section of the report.
3. On page 38 of the Report, it is mentioned that a records search was done for cultural resources within the APE. Please provide the date of when this record search was done.
4. Page 39 of the report discusses a chert flake that was recorded in the vicinity of segment 3. It was determined that this chert flake was most likely imported to the area through gravel. Please elaborate on how this conclusion was reached.
5. On page 40, the Geology and Soils impact discussions for question A i and ii discuss the Project's distance from fault zones but never explicitly discusses exposing people or structures to hazards related to those fault zones. Please elaborate on how the impact is less than significant regarding the exposure of people or structures to seismic ruptures and/or ground shaking.

3.0 Response to Written Comments

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

CUAR
3-9-15
E

EDMUND G. BROWN Jr., Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 12
3347 MICHELSON DRIVE, SUITE 100
IRVINE, CA 92612-8894
PHONE (949) 724-2000
FAX (949) 724-2019
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



Serious drought.
Help save water!



February 27, 2015

Mr. Rodney Woods
Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677-3489

File: IGR/CEQA
SCH#: 2015021010
Log #: 4202
I-5

Dear Mr. Woods:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the **Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (NOI/MND) for the Integrated Regional Water Management Recycled Water System Extension Project**. The project is the installation of approximately 7,500 feet of PVC pipe within paved streets ranging from 4 to 8 inches in diameter. The proposed recycled water pipelines will provide up to 102.3 acre-feet per year of recycled water in lieu of potable water to 32 services. A total of 32 recycled water meters will also be installed and will be connected to adjacent water mains by 2-inch laterals. The recycled water system extension is proposed in MNWD's service area. Four segments are in the City of Aliso Viejo, two segments are in the City of Laguna Hills and two segments are in the City of Laguna Niguel. The nearest state rout to the project area is I-5.

Caltrans is a commenting agency on this project and has the following comments:

1. In the event of any activity in Caltrans right of way an encroachment permit will be required. This includes storage of equipment, construction staging, storm drain construction, retaining wall construction, etc. Allow 2 to 4 weeks for a complete submittal to be reviewed and for a permit to be issued. When applying for Encroachment Permit, please incorporate Environmental Documentation, SWPPP/ WPCP, Hydraulic Calculations, Traffic Control Plans, Geotechnical Analysis, R/W certification and all relevant design details including design exception approvals. For specific details for Encroachment Permits procedure, please refer to the Caltrans Encroachment Permits Manual. The latest edition of the Manual is available on the web site: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits/>

1-1

"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"

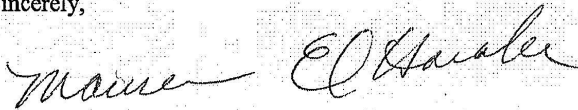
3.0 Response to Written Comments

Mr. Rodney Woods
February 27, 2015
Page 2

Please continue to keep us informed of this project and any future developments that could potentially impact State transportation facilities. If you have any questions or need to contact us, please do not hesitate to call Maryam Molavi at (949) 724-2267.

} 1-1
Cont.

Sincerely,



MAUREEN EL HARAKE
Branch Chief, Regional-Community-Transit Planning
District 12

C: Scott Morgan, Office of Planning and Research

"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"

Letter 1**State Clearinghouse**

- 1-1 This letter from the State Clearinghouse acknowledges that the District complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. This letter also transmits two comment letters from State Agencies: Caltrans and the State Water Resources Control Board. These agencies also submitted letters directly to the District and they are included as Letters 2 and 3 of this Response to Written Comments section. Please see Letters 2 and 3 for responses to these State Agency letters.

3.0 Response to Written Comments

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

EDMUND G. BROWN Jr., Governor

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 12
3347 MICHELSON DRIVE, SUITE 100
IRVINE, CA 92612-8894
PHONE (949) 724-2000
FAX (949) 724-2019
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



*Serious drought.
Help save water!*

February 27, 2015

Mr. Rodney Woods
Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677-3489

File: IGR/CEQA
SCH#: 2015021010
Log #: 4202
I-5

Dear Mr. Woods:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the **Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration (NOI/MND) for the Integrated Regional Water Management Recycled Water System Extension Project**. The project is the installation of approximately 7,500 feet of PVC pipe within paved streets ranging from 4 to 8 inches in diameter. The proposed recycled water pipelines will provide up to 102.3 acre-feet per year of recycled water in lieu of potable water to 32 services. A total of 32 recycled water meters will also be installed and will be connected to adjacent water mains by 2-inch laterals. The recycled water system extension is proposed in MNWD's service area. Four segments are in the City of Aliso Viejo, two segments are in the City of Laguna Hills and two segments are in the City of Laguna Niguel. The nearest state rout to the project area is I-5.

Caltrans is a commenting agency on this project and has the following comments:

1. In the event of any activity in Caltrans right of way an encroachment permit will be required. This includes storage of equipment, construction staging, storm drain construction, retaining wall construction, etc. Allow 2 to 4 weeks for a complete submittal to be reviewed and for a permit to be issued. When applying for Encroachment Permit, please incorporate Environmental Documentation, SWPPP/ WPCP, Hydraulic Calculations, Traffic Control Plans, Geotechnical Analysis, R/W certification and all relevant design details including design exception approvals. For specific details for Encroachment Permits procedure, please refer to the Caltrans Encroachment Permits Manual. The latest edition of the Manual is available on the web site: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits/>

2-1

"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"

Mr. Rodney Woods
February 27, 2015
Page 2

Please continue to keep us informed of this project and any future developments that could potentially impact State transportation facilities. If you have any questions or need to contact us, please do not hesitate to call Maryam Molavi at (949) 724-2267.

Sincerely,



MAUREEN EL HARAKE
Branch Chief, Regional-Community-Transit Planning
District 12

C: Scott Morgan, Office of Planning and Research

"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"

3.0 Response to Written Comments

Letter 2
Caltrans

- 2-1 This comment identifies the permitting requirements if any construction activities take place within the Caltrans right-of-way. None of the proposed recycled water improvements will be within Caltrans roadways or State transportation facilities. No changes were made to the IS/MND based upon this comment.



State Water Resources Control Board

FEB 13 2015

Rodney S. Woods, P.E.
Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Dear Mr. Woods:

INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION (IS/MND) FOR MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT (DISTRICT); INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT (IRWMM) RECYCLED WATER SYSTEM EXTENSION PROJECT (PROJECT); ORANGE COUNTY; STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2015021010

We understand that the District may be pursuing Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) financing for this Project. As a funding agency and a state agency with jurisdiction by law to preserve, enhance, and restore the quality of California's water resources, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) is providing the following information and comments for the environmental document prepared for the Project.

The State Water Board, Division of Financial Assistance, is responsible for administering the CWSRF Program. The primary purpose for the CWSRF Program is to implement the Clean Water Act and various state laws by providing financial assistance for wastewater treatment facilities necessary to prevent water pollution, recycle water, correct nonpoint source and storm drainage pollution problems, provide for estuary enhancement, and thereby protect and promote health, safety and welfare of the inhabitants of the state. The CWSRF Program provides low-interest funding equal to one-half of the most recent State General Obligation Bond Rates with a 30-year term. Applications are accepted and processed continuously. Please refer to the State Water Board's CWSRF website at:

www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/srf/index.shtml.

The CWSRF Program is partially funded by the United States Environmental Protection Agency and requires additional "California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)-Plus" environmental documentation and review. Three enclosures are included that further explain the CWSRF Program environmental review process and the additional federal requirements. For the complete environmental application package please visit:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/srf/srf_forms.shtml. The State Water Board is required to consult directly with agencies responsible for implementing federal environmental laws and regulations. Any environmental issues raised by federal agencies or their representatives will need to be resolved prior to State Water Board approval of a CWSRF financing commitment for the proposed Project. For further information on the CWSRF Program, please contact Mr. Ahmad Kashkoli, at (916) 341-5855.

3-1

FELICIA MARGUS, CHAIR | THOMAS HOWARD, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 | Mailing Address: P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, Ca 95812-0100 | www.waterboards.ca.gov



3.0 Response to Written Comments

- 2 -

It is important to note that prior to a CWSRF financing commitment, projects are subject to provisions of the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), and must obtain Section 7 clearance from the United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and/or the United States Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for any potential effects to special status species.

Please be advised that the State Water Board will consult with the USFWS, and/or the NMFS regarding all federal special-status species that the Project has the potential to impact if the Project is to be financed by the CWSRF Program. The District will need to identify whether the Project will involve any direct effects from construction activities, or indirect effects such as growth inducement, that may affect federally listed threatened, endangered, or candidate species that are known, or have a potential to occur in the Project site, in the surrounding areas, or in the service area, and to identify applicable conservation measures to reduce such effects.

In addition, CWSRF projects must comply with federal laws pertaining to cultural resources, specifically Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106). The State Water Board has responsibility for ensuring compliance with Section 106 and the State Water Board must consult directly with the California State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO). SHPO consultation is initiated when sufficient information is provided by the CWSRF applicant. The District must retain a consultant that meets the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualifications Standards (http://www.nps.gov/history/local-law/arch_stnds_9.htm) to prepare a Section 106 compliance report.

Note that the District will need to identify the Area of Potential Effects (APE), including construction and staging areas, and the depth of any excavation. The APE is three-dimensional and includes all areas that may be affected by the Project. The APE includes the surface area and extends below ground to the depth of any Project excavations. The records search request should extend to a 1/2-mile beyond project APE. The appropriate area varies for different projects but should be drawn large enough to provide information on what types of sites may exist in the vicinity.

Other federal environmental requirements pertinent to the Project under the CWSRF Program include the following (for a complete list of all environmental requirements please visit: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/srf/docs/forms/application_environmental_package.pdf):

- A. Compliance with the Federal Clean Air Act: (a) Provide air quality studies that may have been done for the Project; and (b) if the Project is in a nonattainment area or attainment area subject to a maintenance plan; (i) provide a summary of the estimated emissions (in tons per year) that are expected from both the construction and operation of the Project for each federal criteria pollutant in a nonattainment or maintenance area, and indicate if the nonattainment designation is moderate, serious, or severe (if applicable); (ii) if emissions are above the federal de minimis levels, but the Project is sized to meet only the needs of current population projections that are used in the approved State Implementation Plan for air quality, quantitatively indicate how the proposed capacity increase was calculated using population projections.
- B. Compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Act: Identify whether the Project is within a coastal zone and the status of any coordination with the California Coastal Commission.

3-1
Cont.

3.0 Response to Written Comments

- 3 -

- C. Protection of Wetlands: Identify any portion of the proposed Project area that should be evaluated for wetlands or United States waters delineation by the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), or requires a permit from the USACE, and identify the status of coordination with the USACE.
- D. Compliance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act: Identify whether the Project will result in the conversion of farmland. State the status of farmland (Prime, Unique, or Local Statewide Importance) in the Project area and determine if this area is under a Williamson Act Contract.
- E. Compliance with the Migratory Bird Treaty Act: List any birds protected under this act that may be impacted by the Project and identify conservation measures to minimize impacts.
- F. Compliance with the Flood Plain Management Act: Identify whether or not the Project is in a Flood Management Zone and include a copy of the Federal Emergency Management Agency flood zone maps for the area.
- G. Compliance with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act: Identify whether or not any Wild and Scenic Rivers would be potentially impacted by the Project and include conservation measures to minimize such impacts.

3-1
Cont.

Following are specific comments on the District's draft IS/MND:

1. On pages 10 and 39 of the report, it states "If the Orange County coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be contacted within a reasonable timeframe." However, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 requires that the NAHC be contacted by phone within 24 hours of the discovery of Native American human remains. Please change the above mentioned sentences to reflect what is required by the Health and Safety Code.
2. If pursuing CWSRF funding for the Project, please include a table/list of all the special status species (identified by the USFWS, the California Natural Diversity Database, and the California Native Plant Society) with a potential to occur in the area in the Biological Resources Section of the report.
3. On page 38 of the Report, it is mentioned that a records search was done for cultural resources within the APE. Please provide the date of when this record search was done.
4. Page 39 of the report discusses a chert flake that was recorded in the vicinity of segment 3. It was determined that this chert flake was most likely imported to the area through gravel. Please elaborate on how this conclusion was reached.
5. On page 40, the Geology and Soils impact discussions for question A i and ii discuss the Project's distance from fault zones but never explicitly discusses exposing people or structures to hazards related to those fault zones. Please elaborate on how the impact is less than significant regarding the exposure of people or structures to seismic ruptures and/or ground shaking.

3-2

3-3

3-4

3-5

3-6

3.0 Response to Written Comments

- 4 -

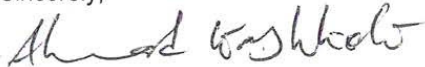
Please provide us with the following documents applicable to the proposed Project if seeking CWSRF or other State Water Board funding: (1) one copy of the draft and final IS/MND, (2) the resolution certifying the IS/MND and a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) CEQA findings, (3) all comments received during the review period and the District's response to those comments, (4) the adopted MMRP, and (5) the Notice of Determination filed with the Orange County Clerk and the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse. In addition, we would appreciate notices of any hearings or meetings held regarding environmental review of any projects to be funded by the State Water Board.

} 3-7

Thank you for the opportunity to review the District's draft IS/MND. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (916)341-5855, or by email at Ahmad.Kashkoli@waterboards.ca.gov, or contact Amanda Dwyer at (916)341-5739 or by email at Amanda.Dwyer@waterboards.ca.gov.

} 3-8

Sincerely,



Ahmad Kashkoli
Senior Environmental Scientist

Enclosures (3)

- 1. Clean Water State Revolving Fund Environmental Review Requirements
- 2. Quick Reference Guide to CEQA Requirements for State Revolving Fund Loans
- 3. Basic Criteria for Cultural Resources Reports

cc: State Clearinghouse
(Re: SCH# 2015021010)
P.O. Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

3.0 Response to Written Comments

Letter 3**State Water Resources Control Board**

- 3-1 This letter addresses the requirements should the project request financing through the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF). The project will not be using CWSRF financing. As noted in the Draft IS/MD (page 4), the project will use Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) grant funding.
- 3-2 The text on pages 10 and 39 of the IS/MND have been revised to reflect notification to NAHC within a 24 hour time period.
- 3-3 The project is not pursuing financing through CWSRF.
- 3-4 The records search was conducted on December 9, 2014. The records search included review of all relevant site records and reports on file with the South Central Coastal Information Center of the California Historical Resources Information System at California State University, Fullerton. The date of the search has been added to page 38 of the IS/MND.
- 3-5 The conclusion regarding the origin of the chert flake was made based upon the fact that the location was previously extensively disturbed and landscaped (see photo below). The single possible flake was recorded in an area that contained imported gravel and the archaeological surveyor from ASM Affiliates noted that it was likely that the flake was imported with the gravel. Additionally, no other cultural materials were observed in the vicinity.



- 3-6 Additional language regarding seismic activity and the proposed project has been added to page 40 of the IS/MND.
- 3-7 The project is not pursuing financing through CWSRF.
- 3-8 This comment provides closing remarks and does not raise any additional environmental-related items.

3.0 Response to Written Comments



CITY OF LAGUNA HILLS

March 3, 2015

Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677
Attn: Rodney Woods

**SUBJECT: INTEGRATED REGIONAL WATER MANAGEMENT (IRWM)
RECYCLED WATER SYSTEM EXTENSION PROJECT**

Dear Mr. Woods:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Recycled Water System Expansion Project. The City of Laguna Hills requests that the following two comments be accounted for in the final document:

- 1. Work along Alicia Parkway to be completed prior to Spring 2016 in order to avoid conflict with a separate City project;
- 2. Repaving requirements along Alicia Parkway to include a 2" grind and asphalt overlay of full lane width for the entire length of the trench.

} 4-1
 } 4-2

Please contact me with any questions regarding the foregoing comments.
Thank you

Sincerely,

Kenneth H. Rosenfield, P.E.
Director of Public Services/City Engineer

CC: David Chantarangsu, Director of Community Development

24035 El Toro Road • Laguna Hills, California 92653 • (949) 707-2600 • FAX (949) 707-2633
website: www.ci.laguna-hills.ca.us

Letter 4**City of Laguna Hills**

- 4-1 The timing requirement that work be completed prior to Spring 2016 has been added to the project description section of the IS/MND. Please see page 9 of the IS/MND.
- 4-2 The repaving requirement for Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway) has been added to the project description section of the IS/MND. Please see page 9 of the IS/MND.

3.0 Response to Written Comments

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4.0 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

4.0 MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

The following mitigation measures, as shown on the following table, shall be applicable to the proposed project.

4.0 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

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4.0 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Action	Timing	Responsibility
Biological Resources				
Potential impact to least Bell's vireo.	<p>The following mitigation measure is applicable to Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity):</p> <p>MM-BIO-1A Least Bell's Vireo</p> <p>Perform construction activities at Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) between August 1 and April 9 to avoid the least Bell's vireo breeding season (April 10 – July 31). If construction is necessary between April 10 and July 31, ensure that noise levels remain below 60 dBA hourly average with the assistance of a qualified acoustician. If noise levels greater than 60 dBA hourly average are proposed at Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) during the species breeding season, protocol surveys for least Bell's vireo shall be performed. If surveys are negative, no further action is needed. If positive, noise reduction measures and/or noise barriers shall be required during project construction activities from April 10 to July 31. If noise levels cannot be kept below 60 dBA hourly average between April 10 and July 31 at these segments, consultation and permitting through the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) shall be required.</p>	If MNWD proposes construction between April 10 and July 31, noise level monitoring will be required to ensure sound levels remain below 60 dBA hourly, so that construction activities can take place. If sound levels are higher than 60 dBA, perform protocol survey. If species present, implement noise attenuation.	If construction activities are proposed between April 10 and July 31.	MNWD, Project Biologist, Noise Consultant, Project Contractor
Potential impact to coastal California gnatcatcher.	<p>The following measure would apply to Segment 7 (Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive):</p> <p>MM BIO-1B California Coastal Gnatcatcher</p> <p>Perform construction activities at Segment 7 (Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive) between August 16 and February 28 to avoid the coastal California gnatcatcher breeding season (March 1 – August 15). If construction is necessary between March 1 and August 15, ensure that noise levels remain below 60 dBA hourly average with the assistance of a qualified acoustician. If noise levels greater than 60 dBA hourly average are proposed at Segment 7 (Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive) during the species breeding season, protocol</p>	If MNWD proposes construction between March 1 and August 15, noise level monitoring will be required. If sound levels remain below 60 dBA hourly, construction activities can take place. If sound levels are higher than 60 dBA,	If construction activities are proposed between March 1 and August 15.	MNWD, Project Biologist, Noise Consultant, Project Contractor

4.0 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Action	Timing	Responsibility
	surveys for coastal California gnatcatcher shall be performed. If surveys are negative, no further action is needed. If positive, noise reduction measures and/or noise barriers shall be required during project construction from March 1 through August 15. If noise levels cannot be kept below 60 dBA hourly average between March 1 through August 15, consultation and permitting through USFWS shall be required.	perform protocol survey. If species present, implement noise attenuation.		
Potential impact to species covered under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.	<p>The following mitigation measure applies to all proposed construction sites:</p> <p>MM-BIO-2 Migratory Bird Treaty Act</p> <p>Perform any necessary ornamental shrub or tree clearing between September 1 and January 14 in order to avoid the avian breeding season. Do not trim or clear any native trees (e.g., those that occur within areas identified as southern riparian scrub). If project construction requires tree or shrub removal or trimming during the typical bird breeding season (i.e., January 15 – August 31), or an active nest is noted, a pre-construction nest survey shall be required. If active nests are present, construction shall be delayed in the nest area plus an appropriate buffer (determined case by case) until the end of the breeding season or until the nest is no longer active.</p>	<p>For construction between January 15 and August 31, a nesting bird survey shall be performed.</p> <p>If nesting birds are found, a buffer shall be maintained between the work area and the nesting birds.</p>	Three days prior to construction.	MNWD, Project Biologist, Contractor
Potential to impact wetlands.	<p>The following measure would apply to Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity):</p> <p>MM-BIO-3 Wetlands</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install construction fencing (e.g., orange snow fencing or similar) at Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) under the supervision of a qualified biologist prior to and maintain during all construction work, including equipment and materials delivery. Ensure that the defined work area and all fencing are entirely within developed areas (e.g., sidewalks, streets) or ornamental landscaping. 	Install construction fencing and provide construction training.	Prior to any construction activities on Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), at M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and at M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity).	MNWD, Project Biologist, Contractor

4.0 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Action	Timing	Responsibility
	<p>Provide training for Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) construction personnel regarding habitat sensitivity and direct that all equipment, dirt spoils, etc. be kept entirely within the fenced work limit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If construction work, staging or other impacts are proposed or accidentally occur in southern riparian scrub habitats, consultation and permitting with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), a division of the State Water Resources Control Board, shall be required. Pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), USACE is authorized to regulate any activity that would result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. (including wetlands and non-wetlands/other waters of the U.S.), which include those waters listed in 33 CFR 328.3. Additionally, a water quality certification or waiver pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA is required for all Section 404 permitted actions. The RWQCB provides oversight of the 401 permit process in California and is required to provide “certification that there is reasonable assurance that an activity that may result in the discharge to waters of the United States will not violate water quality standards.” Pursuant to Division 2, Chapter 6, Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code (CFG), CDFW regulates all diversions, obstructions, or changes to the natural flow or bed, channel or bank of any river, stream or lake that supports fish or wildlife. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement Application must be submitted to CDFW for “any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake.” 			

-120-

4.0 Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Impact	Mitigation Measure	Action	Timing	Responsibility
Geology/Soils				
Potential for soil instability along a 250-foot portion of Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane).	<p>The following mitigation measure is applicable to a 250-foot portion of Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane):</p> <p>MM-GEO-1 Geofabric on Canyon Wren Lane</p> <p>To address the potential for soil instability, a 250-foot portion of proposed Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane) shall be installed between the upper and lower layers of existing geofabric material. Construction shall include excavation of approximately 10 feet wide by four feet deep of compacted soils to allow the geofabric to be rolled out of the way. The geofabric must not be severed. Once Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane) is installed, this portion of Canyon Wren Lane shall be reconstructed pursuant to the Canyon Wren Street Distress Rehabilitation detail sheet prepared by GMU Geotechnical, Inc. (Appendix E of the IS/MND). This includes protecting in place existing recycled and domestic waterlines, air-vac assembly, and two-inch irrigation meter to re-establish their connections per MNWD standards. The reconstruction of Canyon Wren Lane shall be completed to the satisfaction of the City Engineer and Director of Public Works of the City of Aliso Viejo.</p>	Protection of existing geofabric along a portion of the work area of Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane).	During project construction.	MNWD, Contractor

-121-

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS	iii
I. INTRODUCTION	1
II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION	4
III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST	12
A. BACKGROUND.....	12
B. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED	14
C. DETERMINATION	15
IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS.....	24
I. AESTHETICS.....	24
II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES	26
III. AIR QUALITY	27
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.....	33
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES	38
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS.....	40
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS.....	43
VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS	43
IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY	46
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES	50
XII. NOISE	50
XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING	52
XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES.....	53
XV. RECREATION.....	54
XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC.....	54
XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS.....	56
V. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.....	58
VI. PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED.....	60
VIII. REFERENCES	61
IX. MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION	64
X. FINDINGS.....	65

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A	Recycled Water Service Locations
Appendix B	Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Technical Report
Appendix C	Biological Constraints Memorandum
Appendix D	Cultural Resources Study
Appendix E	Canyon Wren Street Distress Rehabilitation Detail

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1. Regional Setting 5
 Figure 2a. Proposed Recycled Water Infrastructure Improvements (1 of 2) 6
 Figure 2b. Proposed Recycled Water Infrastructure Improvements (2 of 2) 7

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1. Recycled Pipeline Segment Location and Details 8
 Table 2. Design Considerations and Generally-Applicable Regulatory Requirements
 for the Project 10
 Table 3. Attainment Status of Criteria Pollutants in South Coast Air Basin 28
 Table 4. SCAQMD Construction Screening Thresholds for Criteria Pollutants..... 28
 Table 5. Localized Significance Thresholds, Capistrano Valley, pounds per day 29
 Table 6. Localized Significance Thresholds, Central Orange County Coastal, pounds
 per day 29
 Table 7. CalEEMod Estimated Construction Emissions, pounds per day 31
 Table 8. Biological Resources Summary 34
 Table 9. General Plan and Zoning Designations of Proposed Recycled Water Meter
 Locations 49
 Table 10. Construction Noise Requirements by Jurisdiction..... 51

ACRONYMS

AFY	Acre-Feet per Year
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plans
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CO	Carbon Monoxide
CO ₂ e	Carbon Dioxide Equivalent
CWA	Clean Water Act
C&D	Construction and Demolition
dBA	A-weighted Sound Level
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
HCP	Habitat Conservation Plan
HOA	Homeowner's Association
IRWM	Integrated Regional Water Management
IS	Initial Study
LST	Localized Significance Threshold
LUST	Leaking Underground Storage Tanks
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MGD	Million Gallons per Day
MNWD	Moulton Niguel Water District
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MUTCD	Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices
MWDOC	Municipal Water District of Orange County
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
ND	Negative Declaration
NO _x	Oxides of Nitrogen
NO ₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
O ₃	Ozone
PM _{2.5}	Particulate Matter–2.5 microns
PM ₁₀	Particulate Matter–10 microns
ROG	Reactive Organic Gas
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SCAB	South Coast Air Basin
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SCWD	South Coast Water District
SLIC	Spills, Leaks, Investigations and Clean Up
SMWD	Santa Margarita Water District
SOCWMA	South Orange County Watershed Management Area

SO ₂	Sulfur Dioxide
SR	State Route
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VOC	Volatile Organic Compound
WATCH	Work Area Traffic Control Handbook

I. INTRODUCTION

A. PURPOSE

This document is an Initial Study (IS) for preliminary evaluation of environmental impacts resulting from implementation of the Moulton Niguel Water District's Recycled Water System Extension Project. For the purposes of this document, this proposed extension as described in Section II, Project Description, will be called the "proposed project."

B. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT REQUIREMENTS

As defined by Section 15063 of the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, an IS is prepared to provide the Lead Agency with information to use in deciding to prepare either an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or a Negative Declaration (ND) as the most appropriate environmental documentation for the proposed discretionary action. MNWD is designated the Lead Agency, in accordance with Section 15050 of the CEQA Guidelines. The Lead Agency is the public agency with the principal responsibility for approving a project that may have significant effects upon the environment.

Through this IS, the MNWD has determined that although the project could have a significant effect on the environment, mitigation has been included to bring all potential impacts to less than significant levels. This determination was made based upon technical analysis, factual data, and other supporting documentation. Therefore, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) is being proposed. The IS/MND will be circulated for a period of 30 days for public and agency review. Comments received on the document will be considered by MNWD before it acts on the proposed project.

This IS has been prepared in conformance with CEQA of 1970, as amended (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.) and Section 15070 of the State Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA of 1970, as amended (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Chapter 3, Section 15000, et seq.).

C. INTENDED USES OF INITIAL STUDY/MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

This IS, along with the attached MND, is an informational document intended to inform MNWD decision-makers, other responsible or interested agencies, and the public of potential environmental effects of the proposed project. The environmental review process has been established to enable public agencies to evaluate environmental consequences and to examine and implement methods of eliminating or reducing any potentially adverse impacts.

D. CONTENTS OF DOCUMENT

This IS/MND is organized to facilitate a basic understanding of the existing setting and environmental implications of the proposed project as follows:

I. INTRODUCTION identifies MNWD contact persons involved in the process, scope of environmental review, environmental procedures, and incorporation by reference documents.

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION describes the proposed project. A description of proposed discretionary approvals and permits required for project implementation is also included.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM presents the results of the environmental evaluation for the proposed project and those issue areas that would have a significant impact, potentially significant impact, a less than significant impact with mitigation incorporated, or no impact.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS evaluates each response provided in the environmental checklist form. Each response checked is discussed and supported with sufficient data and analysis. As appropriate, each response discussion describes and identifies specific impacts anticipated with project implementation. In this section, mitigation measures are also recommended, as appropriate, to reduce adverse impacts to levels of “less than significant” where possible.

V. MANDATORY FINDINGS presents Mandatory Findings of Significance in accordance with Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines.

VI. PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED identifies those persons consulted and involved in preparation of this IS.

VII. REFERENCES lists bibliographical materials used in preparation of this document.

VII. MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

E. SCOPE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

For evaluation of environmental impacts, each question from the Environmental Checklist Form is stated and responses are provided according to the analysis undertaken as part of the IS. All responses take into account the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts. Project impacts and effects will be evaluated and quantified, when appropriate. To each question, there are four possible responses, including:

1. **No Impact:** A “No Impact” response is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to the proposed project.
2. **Less Than Significant Impact:** Development associated with project implementation will have the potential to impact the environment. These impacts, however, will be less than the levels of thresholds that are considered significant and no additional analysis is required.
3. **Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated:** This applies where incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The Lead Agency must describe the mitigation measures and explain how the measures reduce the effect to a less than significant level.
4. **Potentially Significant Impact:** Future implementation will have impacts that are considered significant and additional analysis and possibly an EIR are required to identify mitigation measures that could reduce these impacts to less than significant levels.

#12.

F. PERMITS AND ENTITLEMENTS FOR PROJECT APPROVAL

Agency	Discretionary Action
Moulton Niguel Water District	Project Approval
City of Aliso Viejo	Encroachment Permit
City of Laguna Hills	Encroachment Permit
City of Laguna Niguel	Encroachment Permit

II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A. PROJECT BACKGROUND

Moulton Niguel Water District (MNWD) provides water, recycled water and wastewater service to approximately 172,000 residential users within its 36.5 square mile service area. MNWD's service area includes the City of Laguna Niguel as well as portions of the cities of Aliso Viejo, Dana Point, Laguna Hills and Mission Viejo (MNWD 2011). MNWD imports potable water from the Municipal Water District of Orange County (MWDOC), which in turn imports water from Metropolitan Water District, which obtains water from the Colorado River and State Water Project.

With drought conditions throughout California, MNWD seeks to reduce its potable water use. MNWD, as a member agency of the South Orange County Watershed Management Area (SOCWMA), proposes an extension of existing recycled water distribution infrastructure within its service area utilizing Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) grant funding.

The SOCWMA submitted a 2014 IRWM Drought Grant Proposal to the California Department of Water Resources, Division of IRWM, Financial Assistance Branch. The grant proposal addresses drought impacts on the region through implementing recycled water system expansion projects by MNWD, Santa Margarita Water District (SMWD), and South Coast Water District (SCWD). MNWD's portion of this project will be located within the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo within MNWD's service area. This CEQA document focuses on MNWD's portion of the recycled water system improvements.

B. PROJECT LOCATION AND SETTING

The proposed recycled water system extension is proposed in MNWD's service area (**Figure 1**). Four segments are within the City of Aliso Viejo, two segments are in the City of Laguna Hills and two segments are in the City of Laguna Niguel. New recycled water pipelines will be installed beneath currently paved streets at the termini of existing recycled water lines. The general vicinity surrounding the proposed extensions is primarily residential.

C. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project involves the installation of approximately 7,500 feet of PVC pipe within paved streets, ranging from 4- to 8-inches in diameter. The proposed recycled water pipelines will provide up to 102.3 acre-feet per year of recycled water in lieu of potable water to 12 recycled services in the Laguna Audubon Homeowner's Association (HOA) and 20 recycled services at various locations in the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo. **Appendix A** summarizes the potable water accounts that will be converted to recycled water, along with each community's annual average potable usage. A total of 32 recycled water meters will also be installed. **Figures 2a and 2b** depict the locations of the proposed recycled water pipeline extensions and new recycled water meters. Proposed recycled water line extensions are depicted in red and the proposed new meter location are represented as purple dots. The new meters will be connected to the adjacent recycled water mains by 2-inch laterals. **Table 1** summarizes the specific extensions proposed along each pipeline segment.

Figure 1. Regional Setting

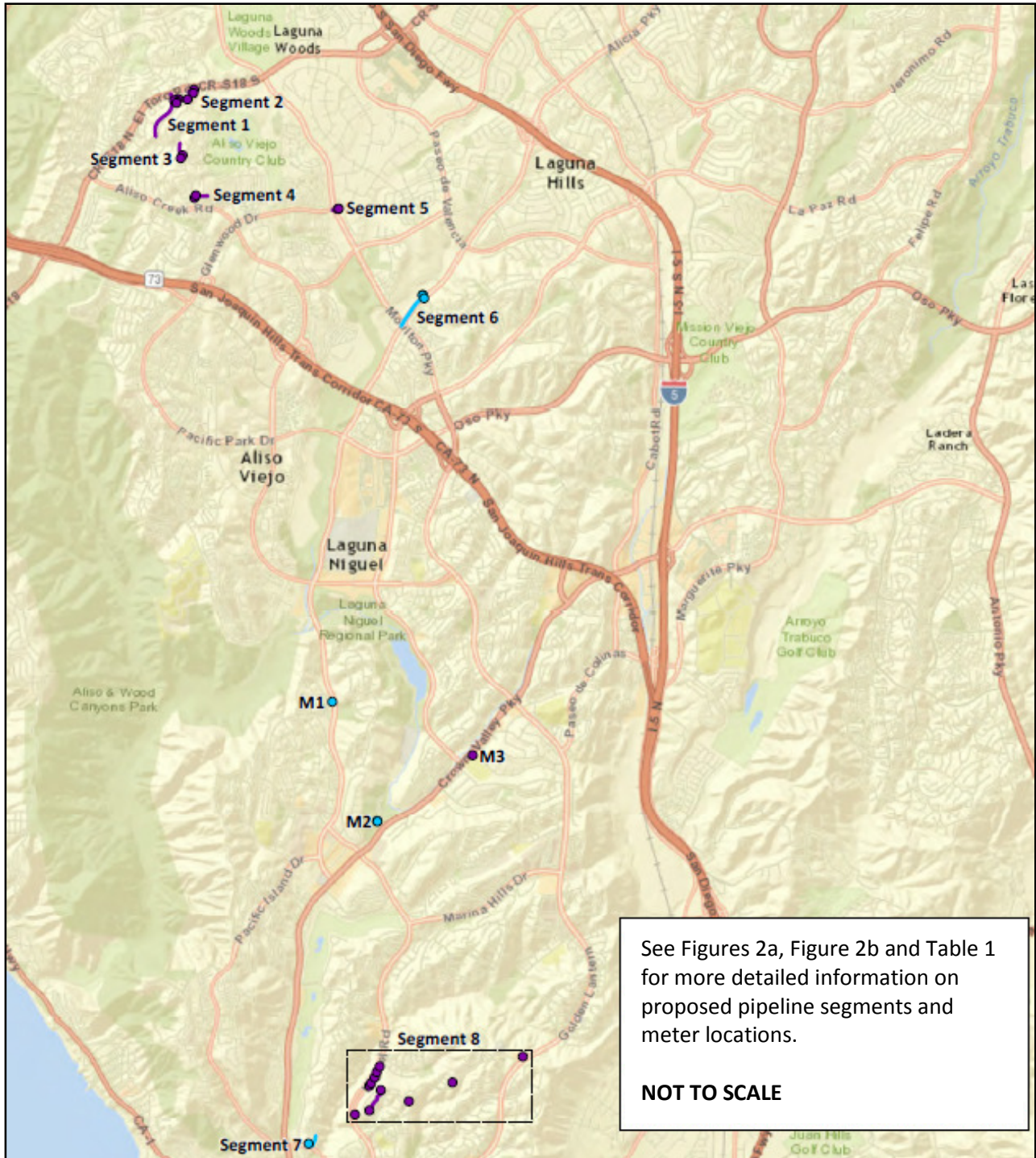


Figure 2a. Proposed Recycled Water Infrastructure Improvements (1 of 2)

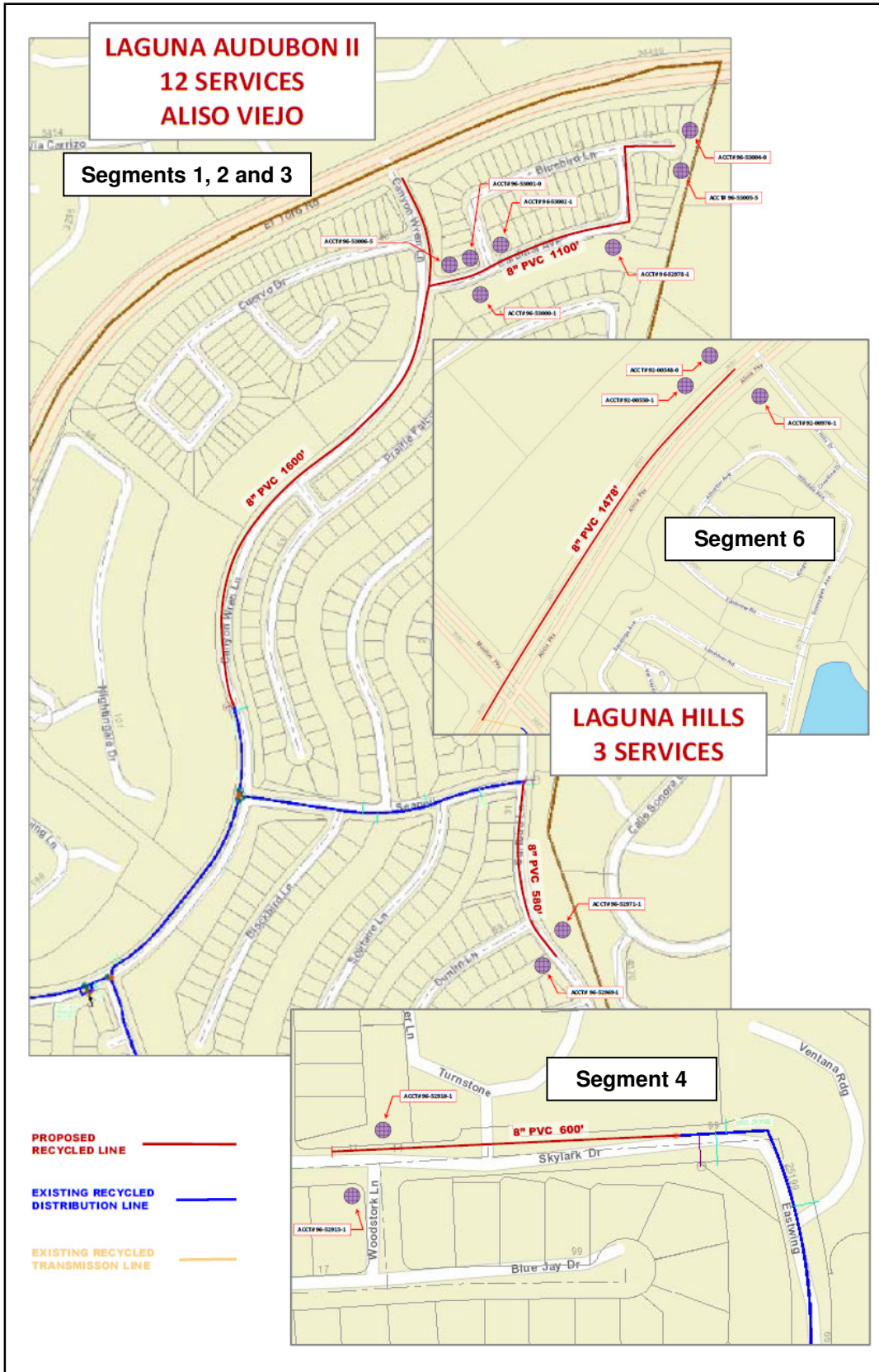
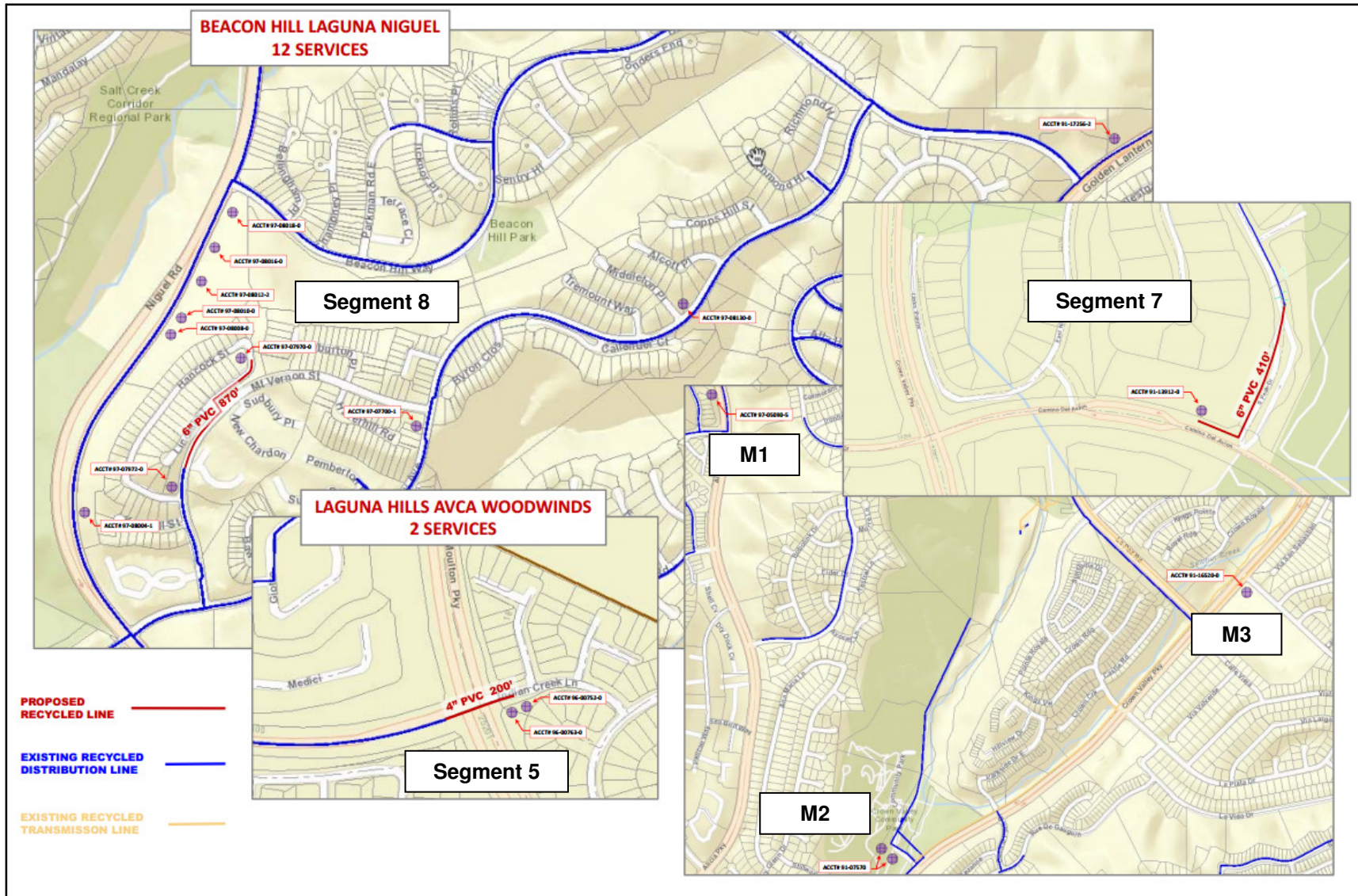


Figure 2b. Proposed Recycled Water Infrastructure Improvements (2 of 2)



-132-

Table 1. Recycled Pipeline Segment Location and Details

Segment Number	Recycled Water Pipeline or Meter Locations	Segment Description	Project Details
City of Aliso Viejo			
1	Canyon Wren Lane	El Toro Road to north of Sea Gull Lane	Approximately 1,600 feet of 8-inch PVC pipe
2	Cardinal Avenue	Canyon Wren Lane to cul-de-sac of Bluebird Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 1,100 feet of 8-inch PVC pipe • 5 recycled water meters on Cardinal Avenue • 2 recycled water meters on Bluebird Lane
3	Surfbird Lane	Seagull Lane to south of Dunlin Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 600 feet of 8-inch PVC pipe • 2 recycled water meters on Surfbird Lane
4	Skylark Drive	West of Woodstork Lane to Eastwing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 600 feet of 8-inch PVC pipe • 1 recycled water meter on Skylark Drive • 1 recycled water meter on Woodstork Lane
City of Laguna Hills			
5	Indian Creek	Glenwood Drive to west of Dry Creek Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 200 feet of 4-inch PVC pipe • 2 recycled water meters on Indian Creek Lane
6	Alicia Parkway	From Aliso Hills Drive to west of Moulton Parkway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 1,500 feet of 8-inch PVC pipe • 3 recycled water meters on Alicia Parkway
City of Laguna Niguel			
7	Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive	Southern end of South Peak Drive and a small portion on Camino del Avion west of South Peak Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 410 feet of 6-inch PVC pipe • 1 recycled water meter on Camion del Avion
8	Mt. Vernon Street	From Revere to northern end of Hancock Street via Lindall Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 900 feet of 6-inch PVC pipe • 6 recycled water meters on Niguel Road • 2 recycled water meters on Hancock Street • 2 recycled water meters on Ridgeway Avenue • 1 recycled water meter on Golden Lantern
M1	Alicia Parkway at Highlands	Alicia Parkway at Highlands	1 recycled water meter on Alicia Parkway
M2	Crown Valley Community Park	Crown Valley Community Park	2 recycled water meters within park
M3	Crown Valley Parkway at Adelanto	Crown Valley Parkway at Adelanto	1 recycled water meter on Crown Valley Parkway

#12.

Project construction is expected to begin in the fourth quarter of 2015 and will take approximately six to nine months to complete. The construction schedule assumes completion of approximately 100 feet of pipeline per day, plus a few days between construction of each segment for restaging construction equipment at the next work site. Only one segment would be under construction at a time.

All pipelines will be placed under existing roadways. Trenching will occur within the roadway at an estimated width of 24 inches and approximately 60 inches (5 feet) deep. Once in place, the recycled water lines will be covered with a minimum of 48 inches of material and then the roadway would be repaved. Recycled water meters will be placed sub-surface within meter boxes and would not be visible, with the exception of meter box tops (flush with ground surface) and lids.

A portion of Segment 1 along Canyon Wren Lane (approximately 250 feet) will be placed approximately four feet deep between the upper and lower layers of existing geofabric material that is below a portion of the roadway in order to protect the existing geofabric material in this area. The geofabric material will be rolled back and the street will be reconstructed in this area (approximate width is 10 feet).

Per the request of the City of Laguna Hills, repaving along Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway) will include a 2-inch grind and asphalt overlay of full lane width for the entire length of the trench. Additionally, the work along Alicia Parkway will be completed prior to Spring 2016 in order to avoid conflict with a separate City project.

Given the proposed width and depth of the trenching, as well as the amount of pipeline to be placed, approximately 3,300 cubic yards of material will be handled during the construction. Recycled water meters will be placed just outside of existing road right-of-way, often next to existing potable meters. The precise location of the recycled water meter will depend on the configuration of the end users' irrigation system and location preference.

Anticipated construction equipment for the project includes a back hoe, water truck, dump truck, paving equipment, and traffic control equipment. Construction staging would be confined to areas that are paved or disturbed.

Permits from Local Agencies

Encroachments permits from Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills and Laguna Niguel will be required for the project. MNWD notes that pursuant to Government Code Section 53091, subdivisions (d) and (e), MNWD is not required to comply with local city building or zoning ordinances, including requirements for building permits and/or inspections, relative to its location or construction of facilities for the production, generation, storage, treatment, or transmission of water. In this case, the purpose of the project is to provide expanded recycled water availability within MNWD's service area, and thus such facilities are exempt from compliance.

Project Design Features

The project incorporates several design features as part of the project which will minimize potential impacts. **Table 2** summarizes these features, which would be made conditions of project approval.

**Table 2. Design Considerations and Generally-Applicable
Regulatory Requirements for the Project**

Air Quality
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project shall adhere to South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) Rules; 401 (Visible Emissions), 403 (Fugitive Dust Control), and 431.2 (Low Sulfur Fuel) during construction-related activities. All construction equipment shall be properly fitted with mufflers. Any rented diesel construction equipment shall be Tier II equipment.
Biological Resources
All construction, including staging, shall occur within developed or disturbed areas and avoid sensitive habitats.
Cultural Resources
If Native American or other human remains are inadvertently discovered during project actions, excavation or disturbance will cease immediately until the remains and the vicinity have been evaluated in accordance with CEQA Section 10564.5, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, as appropriate. Further, if human remains are encountered during project grading, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Orange County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98(b) remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and disposition has been made. If the Orange County Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission shall be contacted within a reasonable timeframe 24 hours . Subsequently, the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the "most likely descendant." The most likely descendant shall then make recommendations, and engage in consultations concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in Public Resources Code 5097.98.
Hazards/Hazardous Materials
No fueling of construction equipment shall occur on site.
Noise
<p>Construction activities, including delivery of material and equipment shall occur in a manner consistent with the noise ordinance for the respective City where the pipeline installation will occur. Noise requirements for each City are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Laguna Niguel - Construction, repair or maintenance of utility facilities shall occur between 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday. Laguna Hills - Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday. Aliso Viejo - Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday. <p>MNWD notes that allowable construction hours for the contractor will be more restrictive than the hours listed above. Moreover, the contractor will be required to comply with each noise ordinance, as appropriate.</p>
Public Services
Coordinate with the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo to ensure that adequate access for emergency responders, including the fire department, would be maintained when portions of roadways may be closed for pipeline installation. This will primarily be achieved through the encroachment permit application review process.

#12.

Transportation and Traffic
Traffic control requirements identified in encroachment permits from the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills and Laguna Niguel will be implemented. In general, traffic control will be performed per guidelines in the Work Area Traffic Control Handbook (WATCH) and the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).
Project contractor will coordinate with the Orange County Transportation Authority if construction activity associated with installation of Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway) results in a need for any temporary relocation of the southbound transit stop for Route 87.
Utilities and Service Systems
Any construction debris that is generated shall be recycled and disposed of in a manner that is consistent with the Construction and Demolition Ordinance where the construction activity takes place.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

A. BACKGROUND

1. **Project Title:** IRWM Recycled Water System Extension Project
2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:**
Moulton Niguel Water District
27500 La Paz Road
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677
3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:**
Mr. Rodney S. Woods, P.E.
(949) 425-3547 or rwoods@mnwd.com
4. **Project Location:** The recycled water distribution system extension will be located in the cities of Aliso Viejo, Laguna Hills and Laguna Niguel within existing road rights-of-way at the termini of existing recycled water pipelines.
5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:** Moulton Niguel Water District, 27500 La Paz Road, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677
6. **General Plan and Zoning Designations:** Typically roadways are not assigned a land use designation. For those segments that propose recycled water meters, the General Plan and zoning designations are identified in the following table:

Segment Number	Recycled Water Pipeline and Meter Location	General Plan/Zoning Designation
City of Aliso Viejo		
1	Canyon Wren Lane (El Toro Road to north of Sea Gull Lane)	No General Plan or zoning designations assigned since this is a roadway.
2	Cardinal Avenue (Canyon Wren Lane to cul-de-sac of Bluebird Lane)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Medium Density Residential and a zoning designation of RM (Residential Medium Density).
3	Surfbird Lane (Seagull Lane to south of Dunlin Lane)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Low Density Residential and a zoning designation of RL (Residential Low Density).
4	Skylark Drive (West of Woodstork Lane to Eastwing)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Low Density Residential and a zoning designation of RL (Residential Low Density).
City of Laguna Hills		
5	Indian Creek (Glenwood Drive to west of Dry Creek Lane)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Planned Community and a zoning designation of PC (Laguna Hills Planned Community).
6	Alicia Parkway (From Aliso Hills Drive to west of Moulton Parkway)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Open Space and zoning designations of OS-2 (Drainage Facilities) and OS-3 (Landscape Corridors).

#12.

Segment Number	Recycled Water Pipeline and Meter Location	General Plan/Zoning Designation
City of Laguna Niguel		
7	South Peak Drive (Southern end of South Peak Drive and a small portion on Camino del Avion west of South Peak Drive)	Proposed recycled water meter location has a General Plan designation of Open Space and zoning designation of OS (Open Space District).
8	Mt. Vernon Street (From Revere to northern end of Hancock Street via Lindall Street)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Residential Detached and Open Space and zoning designations of RS-4 (Single Family District 4), RP (Planned Residential District), and OS (Open Space District).
M1	Alicia Parkway at Highlands	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Open Space and zoning designation of OS (Open Space District).
M2	Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Park & Recreation and zoning designation of PR (Park & Recreation District).
M3	Crown Valley Parkway at Adelanto	Proposed recycled water meter location has a General Plan designation of Open Space and zoning designation of OS (Open Space District).

7. Description of Project: Please see Section II for project description.

8. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

Segment Number	Recycled Water Pipeline and Meter Location	Surrounding Land Use and Setting
1	Canyon Wren Lane (El Toro Road to north of Sea Gull Lane)	Urbanized setting with single family residential
2	Cardinal Avenue (Canyon Wren Lane to cul-de-sac of Bluebird Lane)	Urbanized setting with medium density residential
3	Surfbird Lane (Seagull Lane to south of Dunlin Lane)	Urbanized setting with multi-family residential (Laguna Woods) and single family residential
4	Skylark Drive (West of Woodstork Lane to Eastwing)	Urbanized setting with single and multi-family residential
5	Indian Creek (Glenwood Drive to west of Dry Creek Lane)	Urbanized setting with single family residential
6	Alicia Parkway (From Aliso Hills Drive to west of Moulton Parkway)	Urbanized setting with single and multi-family residential
7	South Peak Drive (Southern end of South Peak Drive and a small portion on Camino del Avion west of South Peak Drive)	Urbanized setting with single and multi-family residential
8	Mt. Vernon Street (From Revere to northern end of Hancock Street via Lindall Street)	Urbanized setting with single family residential

Segment Number	Recycled Water Pipeline and Meter Location	Surrounding Land Use and Setting
M1	Alicia Parkway at Highlands	Single family residential and recreation uses
M2	Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity	Community park and single-family residential
M3	Crown Valley Parkway at Adelanto	Elementary school and single-family residential

9. Other public agencies whose approval may be required:

- City of Laguna Niguel (Encroachment Permit)
- City of Laguna Hills (Encroachment Permit)
- City of Aliso Viejo (Encroachment Permit)

B. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

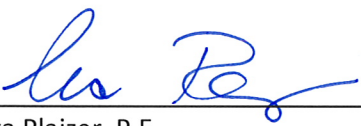
The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Mitigated to Below a Level of Significance,” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages. All impacts identified for the project will be mitigated to below a level of significance.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards/Hazardous Materials | <input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/ Services Systems | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance | | |

C. DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect: 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.



Eva Plajzer, P.E.
Assistant Director of Engineering

3-11-15

Date

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS. Would the proposal:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?			X	
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?			X	
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?			X	
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?				X
II. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES. In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest Legacy Assessment Project and the carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air resources Board. Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?				X
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?				X
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?				X
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?				X
III. AIR QUALITY. Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?			X	
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?			X	

#12.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions, which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?			X	
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?			X	
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?			X	
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?		X		
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?		X		
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?		X		
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?			X	
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?			X	
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional or state habitat conservation plan?				X
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?				X
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5?			X	
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?			X	
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:			X	
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.			X	
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?			X	
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?			X	
iv) Landslides?			X	
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?				X
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?		X		
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?			X	
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?				X
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. Would the project:				
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?			X	
b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?			X	
VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials?			X	
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?				X

#12.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?			X	
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?				X
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?				X
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?			X	
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?				X
IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?				X
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?				X
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?			X	
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?			X	
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?			X	
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood hazard Boundary of Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				X
h) Place within 100-year flood hazard area structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows?			X	
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?			X	
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				X
X. LAND USE AND PLANNING. Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?				X
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?				X
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?				X
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES. Would the project:				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state?				X
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?				X
XII. NOISE. Would the project result in:				
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?			X	
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?			X	
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?				X
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?			X	

#12.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?				X
XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING. Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?				X
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?				X
XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:				
a) Fire protection?			X	
b) Police protection?			X	
c) Schools?				X
d) Parks?				X
e) Other public facilities?				X
XV. RECREATION.				
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?				X
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?				X
XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?			X	

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service (LOS) standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?			X	
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?				X
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				X
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?			X	
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?			X	
XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. Would the project:				
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?				X
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?				X
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources or are new or expanded entitlements needed?			X	
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?				X
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?			X	
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?			X	

#12.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.				
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?		X		
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)			X	
c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?			X	

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

This section provides an evaluation of the impact categories and questions contained in the Environmental Checklist.

I. AESTHETICS

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? Less than Significant Impact

Scenic corridors and vistas are identified in the General Plans for each city within the project boundary. Per the Open Space Element of the City of Laguna Niguel General Plan (page 7) there are no viewscape corridors identified in Laguna Niguel. The Open Space Element does identify landscape corridors, which are meant to have special landscape treatment to provide a pleasant driving experience. Roadways identified as landscape corridors include Camino del Avion, among others. Within the City of Laguna Niguel, the project would install a new recycled water pipeline beneath a short segment of Camino del Avion for Segment 7 (Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive). All pipeline construction activity will be limited to road right-of-way and would be temporary. Assuming a construction schedule of approximately 100 feet per day, the maximum time anticipated for construction activity at any one segment within Laguna Niguel is approximately one month. Recycled water meters would be installed adjacent to the road right-of-way concurrent with (or immediately following) the pipeline construction. Recycled water meters will be placed sub-surface within meter boxes and would not be visible, with the exception of meter box tops (flush with ground surface) and lids. Since pipelines and recycled water meters will be subsurface, there will not be a substantial change to any landscape corridor.

The Conservation Element of the Laguna Hills General Plan identifies five scenic vistas in the City. None of the scenic vista points are located near the portion of the proposed project site within Laguna Hills. The General Plan also identifies landscape corridors, including along Alicia Parkway where pipeline installation will occur. All pipeline construction activity will be limited to road right-of-way and would be temporary. Assuming a construction schedule of approximately 100 feet per day, the maximum time anticipated for construction activity within Laguna Hills is approximately six weeks. Recycled water meters would be installed adjacent to the road right-of-way concurrent with the pipeline construction. Recycled water meters will be placed sub-surface within meter boxes and would not be visible, with the exception of meter box tops (flush with ground surface) and lids. Since pipelines and recycled water meters will be subsurface, there will not be a substantial change to any landscape corridor.

In the City of Aliso Viejo there are two viewscape corridors identified in the Conservation and Open Space Element (Figure COS-1). The proposed project in Aliso Viejo is not located within or near these viewscape corridors; therefore, the project would not impact these corridors. The City of Aliso Viejo also identifies several landscape corridors in the Conservation and Open Space Element. The segments of the project within Aliso Viejo are not located along any of these corridors.

In summary, impacts for this issue area would be less than significant.

#12.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a State Scenic Highway? Less than Significant Impact

The proposed project will take place within existing developed areas. The proposed recycled water pipelines will not be located in areas that will require the removal of trees, historic buildings or cause damage to rock outcroppings.

According to the Caltrans California Scenic Highway Mapping System, there is only one segment of Officially Designated State Scenic Highway in Orange County. It is the segment of State Route (SR)-91 between SR-55 to east of the Anaheim city limits. This is located in northeastern Orange County and is not near the project area. Four additional segments of highway are eligible for State Scenic Highway status, but are not officially designated. These include all of Highway 1 and Highway 74 within Orange County, as well as a small segment of SR-57 and a small segment of SR-91. Additionally, the Orange County Scenic Highway Plan designated Moulton Parkway through Laguna Woods and Laguna Hills as a landscape corridor (2005). Two segments of the project, Segments 5 (Indian Creek) and 6 (Alicia Parkway) will cross Moulton Parkway.

The project will not occur adjacent to any state-designated eligible highways; however, short-term construction impacts to two small portions of Moulton Parkway during installation of Segments 5 (Indian Creek) and 6 (Alicia Parkway) are anticipated to occur over a period no longer than approximately four weeks. This activity would be temporary. Once the pipeline is installed and any recycled water meter boxes are installed, they will not be visible. No long-term damage to any scenic resources are anticipated. Therefore, a less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? Less than Significant Impact

All of the proposed pipeline segments and recycled water meters are in urbanized settings within or adjacent to public roadways. Construction activities will disrupt the existing visual character of the sites for a maximum of approximately six weeks. Construction activities for the entire project area are anticipated for six to nine months. Once installed, the recycled water pipelines and recycled water meters will not be visible and they will be beneath roadways or contained within subsurface meter boxes. No long-term degradation of the existing visual character or quality of the sites and their surroundings is anticipated. A less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? No Impact

The proposed project does not include installation of any lighting. Construction activities will occur during daytime hours; no supplemental lighting is required. The proposed recycled water pipelines and meters would not result in a new source of lighting or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime view in the area. No impacts are identified.

II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES

- a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use? No Impact**

The proposed project is located in urbanized areas in the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo. None of the pipelines are proposed in areas identified as Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance per the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (CDC 2011). Therefore, no impact is identified.

- b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? No Impact**

None of the proposed recycled water pipeline segments are proposed in areas that contain Williamson Act contracts or support agricultural uses. Further, none of the pipeline segments are located in areas that have existing zoning for agricultural use. Roadway rights-of-way are not zoned and the proposed recycled water meters are proposed in areas that have residential, park and recreation or open space designation. None of the proposed recycled water locations have agricultural zoning. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

- c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined in Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))? No Impact**

The recycled water pipelines are located in urbanized areas in the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo. None of the pipeline segments are proposed in areas that would conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land, timberland or timber production land. Roadway rights-of-way are not zoned and the proposed recycled water meters are proposed in areas that have residential, park and recreation or open space designation. None of the proposed recycled water locations have timberland zoning. All construction activity will occur within roadway rights-of-way. Therefore, no impact is identified.

- d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? No Impact**

The recycled water pipelines would be located within developed urban areas that do not contain forest land. Therefore, the project will not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact is identified for this issue area.

- e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? No Impact**

The recycled water pipelines would be constructed in developed roadway rights-of-way and would not be constructed in areas that would be considered farmland or forests, or adjacent to existing forest or farmland. Therefore, the project will not result in changes to the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No impact is identified for this issue area.

III. AIR QUALITY

An Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Technical Report was prepared for the project and is included as **Appendix B**.

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? Less Than Significant Impact

The project area is located in the South Coast Air Basin (SCAB); the South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD) has jurisdiction over the basin. SCAQMD has developed a series of Air Quality Management Plans (AQMP) to meet State and Federal ambient air quality standards. AQMPs are updated regularly in order to more effectively reduce emissions, accommodate growth, and to minimize any negative fiscal impacts of air pollution control on the economy.

Criteria for consistency with the AQMP are guided by the SCAQMD CEQA Air Quality Handbook. There are two criteria:

- Consistency Criterion No. 1: The proposed project will not result in the increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations or cause or contribute to new violations or delay the timely attainment of air quality standards of the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP.

The violations that Consistency Criterion No. 1 refers to are of the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS). As further detailed in Section III(b) below, the project would not exceed the CAAQS for localized criteria pollutants during project construction or operation. Therefore, the project is considered to be compliant with Consistency Criterion No. 1.

- Consistency Criterion No. 2: The proposed project will not exceed the assumptions in the applicable ACMP.

The AQMP growth assumptions are generated by the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). SCAG derives its assumptions, in part, on General Plans of cities located in the SCAG region. Therefore, if a project does not exceed growth projections in the General Plan, then it is considered consistent with the growth assumptions in the AQMP. The project involves the construction of new recycled water pipelines and recycled water meters within MNWD's service area to serve existing customers and would not increase population growth beyond that identified in the General Plans. Therefore, the project is considered to be compliant with Consistency Criterion No. 2.

In summary, implementation of the project would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plans and a less than significant impact is identified.

b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? Less Than Significant Impact

Table 3 shows the state and federal attainment status for criteria pollutants in the SCAB. As shown in Table 3, SCAB is in attainment/maintenance of federal and state standards for carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), and lead, and federal standards for particulate matter-10 microns (PM₁₀). The SCAB is in non-attainment for federal and state standards of ozone (O₃), particulate matter-2.5 microns (PM_{2.5}), and state standards for PM₁₀.

Table 3. Attainment Status of Criteria Pollutants in South Coast Air Basin

Pollutant	State	Federal
Ozone (O ₃)	Nonattainment	Nonattainment (8-hour)
Particulate Matter–10 microns (PM ₁₀)	Nonattainment	Maintenance ¹
Particulate Matter–2.5 microns (PM _{2.5})	Nonattainment	Nonattainment
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Attainment	Maintenance ¹
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	Attainment	Attainment/Unclassified
Sulfur Dioxide (SO ₂)	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Attainment

Source: California Air Resources Board: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/desig/adm/adm.htm>. June 2013.

Note: ¹ A maintenance area is defined as an area that has demonstrated that it has attained the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for a given pollutant, but has implemented a maintenance plan that is in effect for 10 years that requires a demonstration of continued attainment of the NAAQS. Once the area has maintained the NAAQS for a period of 10 years, it can be redesignated as an attainment area. The USEPA granted the request to redesignate the SCAB from nonattainment to attainment for the CO NAAQS on May 11, 2007 (Federal Register Volume 71, No. 91), which became effective as of June 11, 2007

The SCAQMD has screening thresholds for criteria pollutants, as shown in **Table 4**. Any project with daily construction or operational emissions that exceed any of the following thresholds would require additional air modeling to determine significance. If project construction and operational emissions are below these screening thresholds, impacts would be considered less than significant.

Table 4. SCAQMD Construction Screening Thresholds for Criteria Pollutants

Pollutant	Construction Threshold (pounds per day)	Operation Threshold (pounds per day)
CO	550	550
SO _x	150	150
Reactive Organic Gas/Volatile Organic Compounds (ROG/VOCs)	75	55
Oxides of Nitrogen (NO _x)	100	55
PM ₁₀	150	150
PM _{2.5}	55	55

To further evaluate the potential for significant impacts associated with the project, the SCAQMD's Final Localized Significance Threshold (LST) Methodology was used (SCAQMD 2003). The LST Methodology provides a look-up table for construction and operational emissions based on the emission rate, location, and distance from receptors, and provides a methodology for air dispersion modeling to evaluate whether construction or operation could cause an exceedance of an ambient air quality standard. The LST lookup tables are applicable only to sources that are five acres or less in size. A screening air dispersion modeling approach was therefore used to assess the significance of localized construction impacts on receptors in the project vicinity. The LST Methodology only applies to impacts to NO₂, CO, PM_{2.5}, and PM₁₀ concentrations.

According to the LST Methodology, Laguna Niguel is located in Source Receptor Area Zone 21 (Capistrano Valley). Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo are in Source Receptor Area Zone 20 (Central Orange County Coastal). The LSTs for the Capistrano Valley are shown in **Table 5** and the LSTs for Central Orange County Coastal are shown in **Table 6**.

Table 5. Localized Significance Thresholds, Capistrano Valley, pounds per day

Distance to Nearest Receptor, meters ¹	Pollutant					
	NOx	CO	PM ₁₀ - Construction	PM ₁₀ - Operation	PM _{2.5} - Construction	PM _{2.5} - Operation
1 acre						
25	91	696	4	1	3	1
50	93	833	11	3	4	1
100	108	1,234	24	6	8	2
200	140	2,376	48	12	19	5
500	219	7,724	121	29	68	17
2 acres						
25	131	993	6	2	4	1
50	127	1,227	18	5	6	2
100	139	1,696	30	7	10	3
200	165	2,965	55	14	22	6
500	233	8,454	129	31	74	18
5 acres						
25	197	1,804	12	3	8	2
50	189	2,102	37	9	11	3
100	201	2,763	49	12	16	4
200	222	4,387	74	18	30	8
500	278	10,507	148	36	90	22

Source: SCAQMD Final Localized Significance Threshold Lookup Tables (SCAQMD 2009)

¹25 meters = 82 feet; 50 meters = 164 feet; 100 meters = 328 feet; 200 meters = 656 feet; 500 meters = 1,640 feet

Table 6. Localized Significance Thresholds, Central Orange County Coastal, pounds per day

Distance to Nearest Receptor, meters ¹	Pollutant					
	NOx	CO	PM ₁₀ - Construction	PM ₁₀ - Operation	PM _{2.5} - Construction	PM _{2.5} - Operation
1 acre						
25	92	647	4	1	3	1
50	93	738	13	4	5	2
100	108	1,090	27	7	9	3
200	140	2,096	54	13	22	6
500	219	6,841	135	33	76	19
2 acres						
25	131	962	7	2	5	2
50	128	1,089	21	6	7	2
100	139	1,506	35	9	12	3
200	165	2,615	62	15	26	7
500	235	7,493	144	35	83	20
5 acres						
25	197	1,711	14	4	9	2
50	190	1,864	44	11	11	3
100	202	2,455	57	14	18	5
200	223	3,888	85	21	35	9
500	278	9,272	167	41	101	25

Source: SCAQMD Final Localized Significance Threshold Lookup Tables (SCAQMD 2009)

¹25 meters = 82 feet; 50 meters = 164 feet; 100 meters = 328 feet; 200 meters = 656 feet; 500 meters = 1,640 feet

For the purpose of evaluating impacts associated with construction, it was assumed that construction of the project would occur on no more than one acre at a time, which is a conservative assumption as the LSTs for one acre are lower than for larger sites. The LST methodology applies to all receptors, not just sensitive receptors in the project area; therefore, neighboring facilities and buildings must be considered in the LST analysis. The nearest receptor is located adjacent to the project site; therefore, the LST for a 25-meter distance from the site boundary to the nearest receptor was used in the LST analysis. Because the LSTs do not apply to on-road emissions, only the on-site emissions associated with fugitive dust and construction emissions are subject to comparison with the LSTs.

Construction

Emissions of pollutants such as fugitive dust and heavy equipment exhaust that are generated during construction are generally highest near the construction site. Emissions associated with construction would include the following:

- Emissions from removal of pavement to install pipelines
- Emissions of fugitive dust from surface disturbance activities
- Emissions of combustion pollutants from heavy construction equipment
- Emissions of combustion pollutants from worker vehicles
- Emissions of combustion pollutants from heavy-duty vehicles transporting construction materials and equipment to the site

While these construction tasks are generally sequential in that some must precede others at a given location, a certain amount of overlap would likely occur in different locations within the project site as construction proceeds.

Emissions from construction of the project were estimated using the CalEEMod program. **Table 7** summarizes the daily construction emissions for the project, for each month during construction. As shown, construction emissions would be below both the SCAQMD screening thresholds and the LSTs for all pollutants for each phase of construction. Therefore, impacts from construction would be less than significant.

Operation

Operational emissions are limited to inspection and maintenance activities. No additional personnel would be required on a daily basis to maintain and operate the pipelines and meters. A small number of personnel may be required during brief periods when certain maintenance operations must be performed. Emissions associated with these activities would include on-road vehicle emissions and fugitive dust generated from inspection and maintenance vehicles. Since inspection and maintenance activities will occur infrequently, operational-related emissions are projected to be lower than for construction and are thus considered negligible. Therefore, a less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

Table 7. CalEEMod Estimated Construction Emissions, pounds per day

Emission Source	Total Construction Emissions, lbs/day					
	ROG	NOx	CO	SOx	PM ₁₀	PM _{2.5}
<i>Pavement Demolition</i>						
Fugitive Dust	-	-	-	-	0.08	0.01
Heavy Construction Equipment	4.51	48.36	36.07	0.04	2.45	2.29
Construction Truck Trips	0.02	0.32	0.24	0.00	0.04	0.01
Worker Trips	0.07	0.10	0.99	0.00	0.17	0.05
TOTAL	4.60	48.78	37.30	0.04	2.74	2.36
SCAQMD Significance Thresholds	75	100	550	150	150	55
On-Site Emissions	4.51	48.36	36.07	0.04	2.53	2.30
Localized Significance Threshold – Capistrano Valley	N/A	91	696	N/A	4	3
Localized Significance Threshold – Central Orange County Coastal	N/A	92	647	N/A	4	3
<i>Above Significance Thresholds?</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Excavation and Installation</i>						
Fugitive Dust	-	-	-	-	0.21	0.02
Heavy Construction Equipment	3.23	30.45	19.21	0.03	2.23	2.06
Construction Truck Trips	0.04	0.57	0.42	0.00	0.09	0.03
Worker Trips	0.09	0.11	1.19	0.00	0.20	0.06
TOTAL	3.36	31.13	20.82	0.03	2.73	2.17
SCAQMD Significance Thresholds	75	100	550	150	150	55
On-Site Emissions	3.23	30.45	19.21	0.03	2.44	2.08
Localized Significance Threshold – Capistrano Valley	N/A	91	696	N/A	4	3
Localized Significance Threshold – Central Orange County Coastal	N/A	92	647	N/A	4	3
<i>Above Significance Thresholds?</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Pavement Construction</i>						
Heavy Construction Equipment	2.02	20.67	12.98	0.02	1.24	1.14
Worker Vehicles	0.11	0.15	1.52	0.00	0.26	0.07
TOTAL	2.13	20.82	14.50	0.02	1.50	1.21
SCAQMD Significance Thresholds	75	100	550	150	150	55
On-Site Emissions	2.02	20.67	12.98	0.02	1.24	1.14
Localized Significance Threshold – Capistrano Valley	N/A	91	696	N/A	4	3
Localized Significance Threshold – Central Orange County Coastal	N/A	92	647	N/A	4	3
<i>Above Significance Thresholds?</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>No</i>

c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)? Less Than Significant Impact

In analyzing cumulative impacts from a proposed project, the analysis must evaluate a project's contribution to the cumulative increase in pollutants for which the project area is listed as "non-attainment" for the federal or state AAQS. In the event direct impacts from a project are less than significant, a project may still have a cumulatively considerable impact on air quality if the emissions from the project, in combination with the emissions from other proposed, or reasonably foreseeable future projects, are in excess of screening levels identified above, and the project's contribution accounts for more than an insignificant proportion of the cumulative total emissions.

The SCAB is in non-attainment for federal and state standards for PM_{2.5} and ozone, and the state standard for PM₁₀. As illustrated in Section III(b), air quality emissions for the proposed project have been shown to be less than significant on an individual basis. Furthermore, the proposed project is consistent with the AQMP, which identifies the plan to lead the air basin to compliance with all federal and state ambient air quality standards. Because the project's emissions are primarily attributable to temporary construction activities and because the proposed project is consistent with the AQMP and project emissions have been shown to be less than significant, it is concluded that the project's incremental contribution to criteria pollutant emissions would not be cumulatively considerable, and the increase would be less than significant.

d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? Less Than Significant Impact

With regard to evaluating whether a project would have a significant impact on sensitive receptors, air quality regulators typically define sensitive receptors as schools (Preschool-12th grade), hospitals, resident care facilities, residences or day-care centers, or other facilities that may house individuals with health conditions that would be adversely impacted by changes in air quality. A project would have a significant impact on a sensitive receptor if it would result in an unacceptable health risk due to exposure to TACs that would be emitted from the project.

Two schools are located within one-quarter mile of the project. Crown Valley Elementary, located at 29292 Crown Valley Parkway is located near the meter proposed at Crown Valley Parkway at Adelanto (M3). Kinder Care, located at 25507 Moulton Parkway in Aliso Viejo is located approximately one-quarter mile southeast of Segment 5 (Indian Creek).

Construction activities would result in emissions of diesel particulate matter from construction equipment used on site and truck traffic to and from the site, as well as minor amounts of TAC emissions from motor vehicles (such as benzene, 1,3-butadiene, toluene, and xylenes). Health effects attributable to exposure to diesel particulate matter are long-term effects based on chronic (i.e., long-term) exposure to emissions. Health effects are generally evaluated based on a lifetime (70 years) of exposure. Due to the short-term nature of construction at the site, no adverse health effects would be anticipated from short-term diesel particulate emissions. Motor vehicle emissions would not be concentrated in any one area but would be dispersed along travel routes and would not be anticipated to pose a significant health risk to receptors. Impacts would be less than significant.

e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people? Less Than Significant Impact

The project proposes the construction of recycled water pipelines. The project would not be characterized as constructing uses that would generate odors affecting a substantial number of people. No odor emissions would occur during project operation. Project construction could result in minor amounts of odor compounds associated with diesel heavy equipment exhaust; however, the construction equipment would be operating at various locations throughout the construction site and any operations near existing receptors would be temporary. Any odorous emissions would dissipate and are not expected to result in objectionable odors to nearby sensitive receptors. Furthermore, all construction equipment is required to be properly fitted with mufflers and as a project design feature all rented diesel equipment must be Tier II or better. This type of equipment produces less odor because fewer emissions are produced by Tier II equipment. Since any odorous emissions would be short term and would dissipate quickly, project-related activities are not expected to result in objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

A Biological Constraints Memorandum was prepared for the project and is included in **Appendix C**.

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)? Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

Table 8 summarizes the biological conditions for each proposed pipeline segment and meter location. This data was collected during site visits by Rocks Biological Consulting in December 2014.

As shown in Table 8, none of the segments contain sensitive habitats within the proposed construction footprints. All construction will occur in paved, developed, disturbed and/or ornamental areas. Therefore, the project will not have a direct impact to any sensitive habitats.

Sensitive habitats may be located within 100 feet of the proposed work areas, including southern riparian scrub and Diegan coastal sage scrub. While the construction will not directly impact these habitats, these sensitive habitats may provide habitat for sensitive species. This includes the potential for least Bell's vireo (federally endangered species) in southern riparian scrub and California gnatcatcher (federally-listed threatened species) in Diegan coastal sage scrub. If construction activities are proposed during the nesting season and these species are present in adjacent habitat, the project has the potential to impact these species. The nesting season for the least Bell's vireo is April 10 to July 31 and the nesting season for the gnatcatcher is March 1 to August 15. If construction is proposed during these windows, there is a potential for a significant impact resulting from construction noise levels in excess of 60 dBA (A-weighted sound level) hourly average (**Impact BIO-1**). However, implementation of mitigation measures MM BIO-1A for the least Bell's vireo and MM BIO-1B for the gnatcatcher will reduce these potential impacts to below a level of significance.

Table 8. Biological Resources Summary

Segment Number and Location	Sensitive Habitat in Construction Footprint?	Sensitive Habitat within 100 Feet?	Potential for Sensitive Species within 100 Feet?	Potential for Raptors/Nesting Birds within 300 Feet?
City of Aliso Viejo				
1 Canyon Wren Lane	No	No. Site and surroundings are developed and in a highly urbanized area.	No	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.
2 Cardinal Avenue	No	No. Site and surroundings are developed and in a highly urbanized area.	No	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.
3 Surfbird Lane	No	No. Site and surroundings are developed and in a highly urbanized area.	No	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.
4 Skylark Drive	No	No. Site and surroundings are developed and in a highly urbanized area.	No	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.
City of Laguna Hills				
5 Indian Creek	No	No. Site and surroundings are developed and in a highly urbanized area.	No	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.
6 Laguna Hills Alicia Parkway	No	Yes. Southern riparian scrub habitat exists immediately northwest of the site.	Yes. Potential for least Bell's vireo.	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.
City of Laguna Niguel				
7 Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive	No	Yes. Diegan coastal sage scrub exists approximately 90-100 feet east of the site.	Yes. Potential for coastal California gnatcatcher.	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.
8 Mt. Vernon Street	No	No. Site and surroundings are developed and in a highly urbanized area.	No	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.
M1 Laguna Niguel Alicia Parkway	No	Yes. Southern riparian scrub habitat surrounds the site to the southwest, northwest, and west.	Yes. Low potential for least Bell's vireo.	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.
M2 Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity	No	Yes. Southern riparian scrub habitat exists immediately southwest of the site.	Yes. Potential for least Bell's vireo.	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.
M3 Crown Valley Parkway	No	No. Site and surroundings are developed and in a highly urbanized area.	No	Yes. Site and proximity support large trees and/or shrubs.

#12.

Additionally, all sites are near ornamental vegetation or trees and shrubs that could support nesting birds that are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and/or the California Fish and Game Code (§3503) under which it is unlawful to “take, possess, or needlessly destroy” avian nests or eggs. If construction is proposed during the nesting season (January 15 through August 31), there is a potential for an impact to nesting migratory birds (**Impact BIO-2**). However, implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-2 will reduce this impact to below a level of significance.

MM BIO-1A Least Bell’s Vireo

The following mitigation measure is applicable to Segment 6 (Laguna Hills Alicia Parkway), M1 (Laguna Niguel Alicia Parkway) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity):

- Perform construction activities at Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) between August 1 and April 9 to avoid the least Bell’s vireo breeding season (April 10 – July 31). If construction is necessary between April 10 and July 31, ensure that noise levels remain below 60 dBA hourly average with the assistance of a qualified acoustician. If noise levels greater than 60 dBA hourly average are proposed at Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) during the species breeding season, protocol surveys for least Bell’s vireo shall be performed. If surveys are negative, no further action is needed. If positive, noise reduction measures and/or noise barriers shall be required during project construction activities from April 10 to July 31. If noise levels cannot be kept below 60 dBA hourly average between April 10 and July 31 at these segments, consultation and permitting through the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) shall be required.

MM BIO-1B Coastal California Gnatcatcher

The following measure would apply to Segment 7 (Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive):

- Perform construction activities at Segment 7 (Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive) between August 16 and February 28 to avoid the coastal California gnatcatcher breeding season (March 1 – August 15). If construction is necessary between March 1 and August 15, ensure that noise levels remain below 60 dBA hourly average with the assistance of a qualified acoustician. If noise levels greater than 60 dBA hourly average are proposed at Segment 7 (Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive) during the species breeding season, protocol surveys for coastal California gnatcatcher shall be performed. If surveys are negative, no further action is needed. If positive, noise reduction measures and/or noise barriers shall be required during project construction from March 1 through August 15. If noise levels cannot be kept below 60 dBA hourly average between March 1 through August 15, consultation and permitting through USFWS shall be required.

MM BIO-2 Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The following mitigation measure applies to all proposed construction sites:

- Perform any necessary ornamental shrub or tree clearing between September 1 and January 14 in order to avoid the avian breeding season. Do not trim or clear any native

trees (e.g., those that occur within areas identified as southern riparian scrub). If project construction requires tree or shrub removal or trimming during the typical bird breeding season (i.e., January 15 – August 31), or an active nest is noted, a pre-construction nest survey shall be required. If active nests are present, construction shall be delayed in the nest area plus an appropriate buffer (determined case by case) until the end of the breeding season or until the nest is no longer active.

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? Less Than Significant Impact

As shown in **Table 8**, Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) are proximate to Diegan coastal sage scrub and southern riparian scrub habitats, which are sensitive natural communities. However, no construction of pipelines or recycled water meters is proposed in these areas containing sensitive habitat. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? Less Than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated

As stated in Significance Criteria IV(b), Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) are proximate to southern riparian scrub habitat. These habitats are typically deemed jurisdictional wetlands and/or waters of the United States under state and federal regulations. No direct impacts on southern riparian scrub habitats are anticipated to occur. However, if construction work (including digging, spoils, etc.), staging or other impacts are proposed or inadvertently occur in adjacent areas, indirect impacts could occur (**Impact BIO-3**). Implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-3 will reduce this potential impact to below a level of significance.

MM BIO-3 Wetlands

The following measure would apply to Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity):

- If construction work, staging or other impacts are proposed or accidentally occur in southern riparian scrub habitats, consultation and permitting with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), a division of the State Water Resources Control Board, shall be required. Pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), USACE is authorized to regulate any activity that would result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. (including wetlands and non-wetlands/other waters of the U.S.), which include those waters listed in 33 CFR 328.3. Additionally, a water quality certification or waiver pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA is required for all Section 404 permitted actions. The RWQCB provides oversight of the 401 permit process in California and is required to provide “certification that there is reasonable assurance that an activity that may result in the discharge to waters of the United States will not violate water quality

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standards.” Pursuant to Division 2, Chapter 6, Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code (CFGC), CDFW regulates all diversions, obstructions, or changes to the natural flow or bed, channel or bank of any river, stream or lake that supports fish or wildlife. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement Application must be submitted to CDFW for “any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake.”

- Install construction fencing (e.g., orange snow fencing or similar) at Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) under the supervision of a qualified biologist prior to and maintain during all construction work, including equipment and materials delivery. Ensure that the defined work area and all fencing is entirely within developed areas (e.g., sidewalks, streets) or ornamental landscaping. Provide training for Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) construction personnel regarding habitat sensitivity and direct that all equipment, dirt spoils, etc. be kept entirely within the fenced work limit.

d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites? Less than Significant Impact

The biological constraints memorandum prepared for the project did not identify any impacts related to wildlife movement or wildlife corridors. The pipeline segments and meters would not be located in areas that serve as wildlife corridors. None of the project sites are in wildlife corridors, as project impact areas are limited to developed areas. Once installed, the pipelines will be below grade. Meters would also be below grade and would not interfere with avian flight. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? Less than Significant Impact

The proposed pipelines and meters would be located in areas that are developed, disturbed and/or contain ornamental vegetation. No native trees are proposed to be removed as part of the project. Should any ornamental tree trimming or clearing occur, adherence with MM BIO-2, above, is required. Additionally, any activities associated with Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway) shall adhere to the City of Laguna Hills Tree Preservation Policy No. 315, requiring appropriate permitting by the City. Consistent with this policy, donation of replacement trees is encouraged. Therefore, impacts will be less than significant for this issue area.

f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? No Impact

Some of the project segments fall within areas that are covered by the Orange County-Central Coastal Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan (NCCP/HCP); however, MNWD is not a participating agency to this plan. No conflicts with any local biological resource protection regulations or NCCP/HCPs are expected, since the project does not impact wildlife corridors and potential indirect impacts to sensitive biological resources will be mitigated to below a level of significance. Therefore no impact is identified for this issue area.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES

A cultural resources ~~study records search~~ was prepared for the project by ASM Affiliates and is included as **Appendix D**.

a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5? No Impact

A search of existing records and a field survey were performed as part of the cultural resources analysis for the project. The records search included review of all relevant site records and reports on file with the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) of the California Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) at California State University, Fullerton. The search included the project site and a radius of one-half mile surrounding the site. In addition, historic aerial photographs and USGS topographic maps of this area were consulted. The records search was completed on December 9, 2104. The field survey, conducted ~~in~~ on December 14, 2014, covered all proposed recycled water pipeline alignments and recycled water meters. The proposed recycled water pipeline alignments and locations of recycled water meters are each located within developed residential tracts under existing streets, with the exception of Segment 4 (Skylark Drive), which extends under landscaped lawn just north of Skylark Drive in Aliso Viejo.

Seventy-two cultural resource studies have been conducted and a total of 25 cultural resources have been recorded within a one-half mile radius of the project site. A single chert flake was recorded in the vicinity of Segment 3 (Surfbird Lane) during the field survey. Greater detail is provided below. No historical resources have been noted.

Since the proposed pipeline alignments and meter locations are located within existing developed residential tracts and disturbance has already occurred, construction and operation of the proposed project will not result in the removal of any structures or historical resources. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to § 15064.5? Less Than Significant Impact

The County of Orange General Plan includes a prehistoric archaeology sensitivity map (Figure VI-10) as part of its Resources Element. Southern Orange County includes areas of sensitivity for cultural resources with the proposed pipeline and meter locations falling in the following districts: Newport Bay area, Coastal area, Aliso Creek area, and Coastal Hills area. City-level General Plans further detail the sensitivity of archaeological resources.

As identified above, 25 cultural resources have been recorded within a one-half mile radius of the project site. One of these sites, P-30-000659, is located within the proposed construction area for Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway). This resource was recorded in 1977 as a sparse, 100-meter by 150-meter lithic scatter. Cores, choppers, and a metate were noted on the site surface. The site did not appear to extend to depth. This site is currently located under Alicia Parkway, near the intersection with Aliso Hills Road in Laguna Hills. Therefore, this site has been destroyed as a result of prior development of the area.

#12.

A single chert flake was recorded in the vicinity of Segment 3 (Surfbird Lane) during the field survey. During the survey it was clear that the area was disturbed and it is likely that this chert flake was imported to the site in gravel. No additional resources were identified during the field survey.

Since the pipelines and meters are proposed in areas that are already urbanized and have experienced subsurface construction work, and no significant resources were identified during the cultural resources study, impacts to archaeological resources are expected to be less than significant.

c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? Less Than Significant Impact

The County of Orange General Plan includes a paleontology sensitivity map (Figure VI-9) as part of its Resources Element. Southern Orange County is an area of sensitivity for paleontological resources, with the proposed pipeline and meter locations falling in the San Joaquin Hills and Laguna Hills–Dana Point districts. City-level General Plans further detail the sensitivity of paleontological resources.

The proposed pipelines and meters are located in urbanized residential areas that have already experienced significant disturbance. Since the project is proposed in areas that are already urbanized and have experienced subsurface construction work, and no significant resources were identified during the cultural resources study, impacts to paleontological resources are expected to be less than significant.

d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? Less Than Significant Impact

Cemeteries, isolated Native American remains, or other human remains are not expected to occur within the areas proposed for recycled water line extension. The pipelines and meters are proposed in areas that are developed and urbanized; therefore, impacts would be less than significant. Further, inadvertent discoveries of Native American or human remains are required to be handled in a manner in accordance with State laws.

If Native American or other human remains are inadvertently discovered during project actions, excavation or disturbance will cease immediately until the remains and the vicinity have been evaluated in accordance with CEQA Section 10564.5, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, and the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, as appropriate. Further, if human remains are encountered during project grading, California Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the Orange County Coroner has made the necessary findings as to origin. Further, pursuant to California Public Resources Code Section 5097.98(b) remains shall be left in place and free from disturbance until a final decision as to the treatment and disposition has been made. If the Orange County Coroner determines the remains to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission shall be contacted within a reasonable timeframe 24 hours. Subsequently, the Native American Heritage Commission shall identify the “most likely descendant.” The most likely descendant shall then make recommendations, and engage in consultations concerning the treatment of the remains as provided in Public Resources Code 5097.98.

Adherence to these regulatory requirements is also noted in the design considerations and generally-applicable regulatory requirements for the project (**Table 2**). In summary, impacts would be less than significant.

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS

a) **Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:**

i) **Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning map, issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. Less than Significant Impact**

Based upon review of the United States Geologic Survey (USGS) Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning mapping database, the project area is not located within an area identified to contain earthquake faults. The nearest faults to the project area include the Elsinore Fault to the east and the Newport-Inglewood Fault to the west. The project area is approximately 12 miles from the Elsinore Fault and three miles from the Newport-Inglewood Fault. While the project is not located directly along a fault line, the southern California region is seismically active as a whole with faults capable of producing seismic shaking at the proposed recycled water pipelines and associated meters. However, this does not pose any risk of loss, injury, or death, as the project does not propose any structures for human occupancy. Any failure of the small diameter recycled water pipelines, as proposed by this project, would not expose people to substantial adverse effects. Impacts would be less than significant.

ii) **Strong seismic ground shaking? Less Than Significant Impact**

The proposed project is located in seismically-active Orange County and the pipelines and meters could to be subjected to strong ground motion from regional seismic activity. As identified above, the project area is not located within an area identified to contain earthquake faults. The nearest faults to the project area include the Elsinore Fault to the east and the Newport-Inglewood Fault to the west. The project area is approximately 12 miles from the Elsinore Fault and three miles from the Newport-Inglewood Fault. Given that the project site is not within an area identified to contain earthquake faults and the distance to the above mentioned faults, it can be concluded the site would not be affected by seismic ground shaking any more than any other area in seismically-active southern California. Additionally, any failure of the small diameter recycled water pipelines from strong seismic ground shaking, would not expose people to substantial adverse effects. Impacts would be less than significant.

iii) **Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? Less than Significant Impact**

Liquefaction involves the substantial loss of shear strength in saturated soil, usually taking place within a soil medium exhibiting a uniform, fine grained characteristic, loose consistency and low confining pressure when subjected to impact by seismic or dynamic loading. Liquefaction is also associated with lateral spreading, excessive settlement, and failure of shallow bearing foundations.

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The General Plans for the respective cities where the pipeline segments are proposed were reviewed. Per the Landslide and Liquefaction Hazard Areas map (Figure S-1) of the Laguna Hills General Plan, the proposed pipeline and meter locations are located outside of potential liquefaction areas. According to the Safety Policy Map (Figure S-1) of the Safety Element of the Aliso Viejo General Plan, the proposed pipeline and meter locations in Aliso Viejo are located outside of potential liquefaction areas with the exception of Segment 5 (Indian Creek). The City of Laguna Niguel General Plan does not depict areas potentially susceptible to liquefaction.

Despite its location within a potential liquefaction area, construction and operation of Segment 5 (Indian Creek) and the associated meters does not pose any risk of loss, injury, or death, as the project does not propose any structures for human occupancy. Any failure to the recycled water pipelines due to seismic-related ground failure and/or liquefaction would not jeopardize human safety.

Additionally, the County of Orange General Plan was reviewed. According to Figure IX-12 of the Safety Element, liquefaction in Orange County is associated with areas of granular sandy soil with high water content. This generally corresponds to low lying areas, often associated with river beds and coastal fill areas. The pipeline segment locations are not proposed in potential liquefaction areas, as depicted in the County of Orange General Plan. In summary, impacts related to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, would be less than significant.

iv) Landslides? Less than Significant Impact

Landslide hazard zones are identified in the Safety Element of the local General Plans. The Seismic/Public Safety Element of the Laguna Niguel General Plan identifies potential landslide areas (Figure SA-2). None of the proposed recycled water pipelines or meters are proposed in the landslide hazard zones identified in the Laguna Niguel Safety Element. Further, the proposed pipelines and water meters in Laguna Niguel are not proposed in steep areas; therefore they are unlikely to be subject to landslide. No impact is identified for the segments within Laguna Niguel.

Figure S-1 of the Safety Element of the Laguna Hills General Plan identifies landslide hazard areas and states that slopes steeper than 25 degrees (approximately 2:1) are potentially subject to instability. The proposed pipelines and water meters in Laguna Hills are not proposed in steep areas; therefore, they are unlikely to be subject to landslide. No impact is identified for the segments with Laguna Hills.

Per the Safety Policy Map (S-1) of the Safety Element of the Aliso Viejo General Plan, portions of two of the four pipeline segments are proposed in areas that are identified as landslide hazards (Segment 2, Cardinal Avenue and Segment 3, Surfbird Lane). Additionally, Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane) is adjacent to a mapped landslide hazard area. The proposed project is not a human occupancy structure. In summary impacts would be less than significant for the segments within Aliso Viejo.

b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? No Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines below grade within existing roadway rights-of-way. Pipeline construction would occur within already paved areas that do not

have the potential for soil erosion. The only soil handling will be the removal of soil at depth via a back hoe in order to place the recycled water pipeline segments. Once in place, each pipeline will be covered with a minimum of 48 inches of material. The impacted roadway will be repaved. Proposed recycled water meters would be placed subsurface in meter boxes. In summary, no grading or other activities which would result in substantial erosion or loss of topsoil are proposed. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated

As described in Section IV.a.iii and IV.a.iv, portions of the project site are proposed in or adjacent to areas that could be subject to landslide and liquefaction; however, given the type of project, impacts to humans would not occur.

A 250-foot portion of Segment 1 proposed underneath Canyon Wren Lane is located within an area that was rehabilitated in 2013 to address past slope instability issues. The rehabilitation consisted of installation of two layers of high strength mirafi/tencate geofabric between layers of 90 percent compacted fill within the upper five feet of soils. While the rehabilitation does not preclude on-going slope movement, the rehabilitation was completed to minimize future risk along Canyon Wren Lane. This potential future movement could impact operation of Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane) **(Impact GEO-1)**.

MM GEO-1 Geofabric on Canyon Wren Lane, Aliso Viejo

- To address the potential for soil instability, a 250-foot portion of proposed Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane) shall be installed between the upper and lower layers of existing geofabric material. Construction shall include excavation of approximately 10 feet wide by four feet deep of compacted soils to allow the geofabric to be rolled out of the way. The geofabric must not be severed. Once Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane) is installed, this portion of Canyon Wren Lane shall be reconstructed pursuant to the Canyon Wren Street Distress Rehabilitation detail sheet prepared by GMU Geotechnical, Inc. **(Appendix E)**. This includes protecting in place existing recycled and domestic waterlines, air-vac assembly, and two-inch irrigation meter to re-establish their connections per MNWD standards. The reconstruction of Canyon Wren Lane shall be completed to the satisfaction of the City Engineer and Director of Public Works of the City of Aliso Viejo.

Implementation of mitigation measure MM GEO-1 will reduce potential impacts to below a level of significance.

d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? Less Than Significant Impact

The proposed recycled water pipelines and meters are proposed in areas that are already developed and have been underlain by compacted fill material for development. Proposed pipelines and meter boxes will be placed subsurface. Impacts would be less than significant.

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- e) **Have soils capable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? No Impact**

The project does not propose any septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- a) **Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? Less Than Significant Impact**

Global climate change, including the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG), is an emerging environmental concern being raised on statewide, national, and global levels. Regional, state, and federal agencies are developing strategies to control pollutant emissions that contribute to global climate change, including California Assembly Bill 32, which requires the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop regulations and market mechanisms to ultimately reduce California's greenhouse gas emissions.

GHG emissions for the project would be primarily associated with emissions from temporary construction activities (fossil-fuel consumption). The SCAQMD has adopted a significance threshold of 10,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) for industrial projects. Based on the results of the CalEEMod model as described further in Section III, above, the project would generate a total of 686 metric tons of CO₂e emissions during construction. The SCAQMD recommends amortizing construction emissions over a period of 30 years to estimate the contribution of construction emissions to operational emissions over the project lifetime. Amortized over 30 years, construction of the project will generate 23 metric tons of CO₂e on an annualized basis. This level is below the SCAQMD significance threshold of 10,000 metric tons of CO₂e emissions for industrial projects. Therefore, the project's GHG emissions would be less than significant.

- b) **Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? Less Than Significant Impact**

The proposed project is consistent with the AQMP as identified in III(a), above, which identifies the plan to lead the SCAB to compliance with all Federal and State ambient air quality standards. Because the proposed project is consistent with the AQMP and project emissions have been shown to be less than significant, it is concluded that the project's incremental contribution to criteria pollutant emissions, including CO₂, would not be cumulatively considerable with regards to GHG emissions. Therefore, the project will not conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation. Impacts will be less than significant.

VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

- a) **Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials? Less Than Significant Impact**

Hazardous materials include solids, liquids, or gaseous materials that, because of their quantity, concentration, or physical, chemical, or infectious characteristics, could pose a threat to human health or the environment. Hazards include the risks associated with potential explosions, fires, or release of hazardous substances in the event of an accident or natural disaster, which may cause or

contribute to an increase in mortality or serious illness, or pose substantial harm to human health or the environment.

Construction equipment used at the project site would contain lubricants, and various other liquids needed for operation. In addition, workers would commute to the project site via private vehicles, and would operate construction vehicles/equipment on both public and private streets. Materials hazardous to humans would be present during project construction. These materials could include diesel fuel, gasoline, equipment fluids, concrete, cleaning solutions and solvents, lubricant oils, and adhesives. The potential exists for direct impacts to human health from accidental spills of small amounts of hazardous materials from construction equipment during installation of the proposed pipelines and meters; however, the proposed project would be required to comply with federal, state, and applicable Municipal Code regulations for the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo, which regulate and control those materials handled onsite. Additionally, no fueling of construction equipment shall occur onsite. Compliance with these restrictions and laws, as well as adherence to project design features for hazards and air quality (Table 2) ensure that potentially significant impacts would not occur. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? No Impact

The project involves the extension of existing recycled water pipelines. Operation of the project does not involve hazardous materials and would not result in hazardous emissions. Recycled water pipelines would not be characterized as a use that would create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonable foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? Less than Significant Impact

Two schools are located within one-quarter mile of the project. Crown Valley Elementary, located at 29292 Crown Valley Parkway is located near the meter proposed at Crown Valley Parkway at Adelanto (M3). Kinder Care, located at 25507 Moulton Parkway in Aliso Viejo is located approximately one-quarter mile southeast of Segment 5 (Indian Creek). Operation of the project does not involve hazardous materials and would not result in hazardous emissions. The recycled water pipelines would not be characterized as a use that would emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste. The construction and the operations of the project would not subject sensitive receptors to hazardous materials or substances. A less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? No Impact

A review of the California Department of Toxic Substance Control EnviroStor Geotracker Database was conducted. This database contains information on the following types of sites: Federal Superfund, State Response, Voluntary Cleanup, School Cleanup, Evaluations, School Investigations,

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Military Evaluations, Tiered Permits, Corrective Action, Hazardous Waste Permits, Monitoring Well, Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) and Spills, Leaks, Investigations and Clean Up (SLIC).

Based upon the Geotracker review, none of the proposed project segments are included on a list of hazardous materials sites. One site is located within ¼-mile of the proposed pipelines. A LUST cleanup site located at 26161 Gordon Road in Laguna Hills is approximately ¼-mile southeast of Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway). This MNWD facility has completed its required cleanup activities and the case has been closed. No impacts from this site are anticipated at the proposed project.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? No Impact

The nearest airport to any of the proposed pipeline segments is John Wayne Airport, which is located over eight-and-a-half miles to the northwest of Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane). None of the proposed pipeline segments are within two miles of a public airport or public use airport. Further, the project does not propose habitable structures for living or working. Rather, the project involves the extension of recycled water pipelines. Therefore, there is no potential for a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. No impact is identified for this issue area.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? No Impact

None of the proposed pipeline segments are located in the vicinity of a private airstrip. Further, the project does not propose habitable structures for living or working. Rather, the project involves an extension of recycled water pipelines. Therefore, there is no potential for a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area. No impact is identified for this issue area.

g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? Less than Significant Impact

Temporary lane closures could be required on a small portion of these roads for project construction and pipeline installation. Any such closures would generally be limited to a single lane and are not anticipated to result in complete closure of the roadway for vehicle traffic in either direction. Thus traffic flow, including the movement of emergency vehicles, would still be permitted. One of the design features for the project (Table 2) would implement traffic control requirements identified in encroachment permits from the various cities and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in the Work Area Traffic Control Handbook (WATCH) and the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) to ensure adequate emergency access is maintained. Once installed, the pipelines and water meters will be below grade and will not impact emergency response or evacuation. Impacts are considered less than significant for this issue area.

h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands? No Impact

The proposed pipeline segments would be located in urbanized areas and do not include construction that would expose people or structures to wildland fire. No wildlands are located

proximate to the proposed pipeline segments. No impacts are identified due to fire risks involving wildland fires.

IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

a) **Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements? No Impact**

The project does not propose waste discharges that require waste discharge requirement permits, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits, or water quality certification from the Santa Ana or San Diego RWQCB. The project will bring recycled water to a greater portion of MNWD's service area. Assuming a trench width of 24 inches for each segment, an NPDES permit is not required because total ground disturbance for installation of the proposed pipelines will be less than one acre. Additionally, the project would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. No change in the amount of impervious surface would occur with installation of the proposed pipelines and the proposed finished grade will match existing conditions such that a change in surface water runoff would not occur. Best management practices would be implemented during project construction to minimize potential water quality impacts. No impact is identified for this issue area.

b) **Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge, such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)? No Impact**

The project would not rely on groundwater supplies nor would it interfere with groundwater recharge. According to MNWD's 2010 Urban Water Management Plan (UWMP), groundwater supplies are not available within the MNWD service area due to the underlying geology. The project proposes installation of new recycled water pipelines. No change in the amount of impervious surface would occur with installation of the proposed pipelines and the proposed finished grade will match existing conditions such that a change in surface water runoff and any existing groundwater recharge would not occur. The project will not affect groundwater supplies or recharge. No impact is identified for this issue area.

c) **Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site? Less than Significant Impact**

The project involves the installation of new recycled water pipelines and meters. The proposed pipelines would be located underground in currently paved, developed or disturbed areas. No change in the amount of impervious surface would occur with installation of the proposed pipelines and the proposed finished grade will match existing conditions such that a change in surface water runoff would not occur. Best management practices would be implemented during project construction to minimize potential water quality impacts. No streams or rivers are located adjacent or proximate to the project sites. Thus, the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the sites or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site. A less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

#12.

- d) **Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site? Less than Significant Impact**

The project involves the installation of new recycled water pipelines and meters. The proposed pipelines would be located underground in currently paved, developed or disturbed areas. No change in the amount of impervious surface would occur with installation of the proposed pipelines and the proposed finished grade will match existing conditions such that a change in surface water runoff would not occur. Best management practices would be implemented during project construction to minimize potential water quality impacts. No streams or rivers are located adjacent or proximate to the project sites. Thus, the project would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the sites or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner, which would result in flooding on- or off-site. A less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

- e) **Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff? Less than Significant Impact**

The project involves the installation of new recycled water pipelines and meters. The proposed pipelines would be located underground in currently paved, developed or disturbed areas. No change in the amount of impervious surface would occur with installation of the proposed pipelines and the proposed finished grade will match existing conditions such that a change in surface water runoff would not occur. Best management practices would be implemented during project construction to minimize potential water quality impacts. Thus, the project will not create or contribute runoff that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide a substantial additional source of polluted runoff. The project does not introduce a use that would generate or increase runoff, since it is proposed in already paved areas. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

- f) **Otherwise substantially degrade water quality? Less Than Significant Impact**

The project would not substantially degrade water quality. Best management practices would be implemented during project construction to minimize potential water quality impacts. Additionally, no change in the amount of impervious surface would occur with installation of the proposed pipelines so a change in surface water runoff would not occur. The project involves the installation of new recycled water pipelines and meters. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

- g) **Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary of Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map? No Impact**

According to Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panel 0429J covering Orange County and incorporated areas, a portion of the proposed pipeline Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway) in the City of Laguna Hills is located in special flood hazard area subject to inundation by the one percent annual chance flood (FEMA 2009). This segment is located in Zone AE, where base flood elevations have been determined. A portion of this pipeline segment is also located in Zone X, an area of lower flood risk. However, the project does not propose the construction of housing. The project involves the

installation of new recycled water pipelines and meters. Therefore, the project would not place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazards Boundary of a FIRM or other flood hazard delineation map. No impact is identified for this issue area.

h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures, which would impede or redirect flood flows? Less than Significant Impact

Per the Flood Plain Map (Figure SA-3 of the Seismic/Public Safety Element) of the Laguna Niguel General Plan, the pipeline segments and meters are proposed outside of 100-year flood zones (1992). For the pipeline segments proposed in Aliso Viejo, none are proposed in areas mapped as 100-year flood zones, as shown on the Safety Policy Map (Figure S-1 of the Safety Element) of the Aliso Viejo General Plan (2004). Therefore, since pipelines proposed in these areas would be located outside of 100-year flood hazard areas, there is no potential to impede or redirect flood flows.

In the City of Laguna Hills a portion of the proposed pipeline segment along Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway) is located in special flood hazard area Zone AE and other flood area Zone X as shown on the Flood Hazard Map (Figure S-3 of the Safety Element) of the Laguna Hills General Plan (2009) and FIRM Panel 0429J. Once the pipelines and meter boxes are installed, they will remain below grade and will not impede or redirect flood flows. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam? Less than Significant Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines and meters. Most of the pipeline segments are proposed outside of 100-year flood hazard areas. Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway) is located within 100-year flood hazard areas; however, the pipelines and meter boxes will be below grade and will not expose people or structures to flooding. No levees or dams are located within the project vicinity. Therefore, the project does not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding. A less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow? No Impact

The proposed pipeline segments and meters are not located near a coastline, lake or mountainous area that would be subject to seiche, tsunami, or mudflow. No impacts are identified for this issue area.

X. LAND USE AND PLANNING

a) Physically divide an established community? No Impact

The project does not propose any uses that divide an established community. The proposed project is the installation of new recycled water pipelines within existing roadway rights-of way. The pipelines will be installed below grade and are not of a size or scale that would have the potential to physically divide an established community. No impact is identified.

#12.

- b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? Less than Significant Impact

Typically roadways are not assigned a land use designation. For those segments that propose recycled water meters, the General Plan and zoning designations are identified in **Table 9**.

Table 9. General Plan and Zoning Designations of Proposed Recycled Water Meter Locations

Segment Number	Recycled Water Pipeline and Meter Location	General Plan/Zoning Designation
City of Aliso Viejo		
1	Canyon Wren Lane (El Toro Road to north of Sea Gull Lane)	No General Plan or zoning designations assigned since this is a roadway.
2	Cardinal Avenue (Canyon Wren Lane to cul-de-sac of Bluebird Lane)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Medium Density Residential and a zoning designation of RM (Residential Medium Density).
3	Surfbird Lane (Seagull Lane to south of Dunlin Lane)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Low Density Residential and a zoning designation of RL (Residential Low Density).
4	Skylark Drive (West of Woodstork Lane to Eastwing)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Low Density Residential and a zoning designation of RL (Residential Low Density).
City of Laguna Hills		
5	Indian Creek (Glenwood Drive to west of Dry Creek Lane)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation Planned Community and a zoning designation of PC (Laguna Hills Planned Community).
6	Alicia Parkway (From Aliso Hills Drive to west of Moulton Parkway)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Open Space and zoning designations of OS-2 (Drainage Facilities) and OS-3 (Landscape Corridors).
City of Laguna Niguel		
7	South Peak Drive (Southern end of South Peak Drive and a small portion on Camino del Avion west of South Peak Drive)	Proposed recycled water meter location has a General Plan designation of Open Space and zoning designation of OS (Open Space District).
8	Mt. Vernon Street (From Revere to northern end of Hancock Street via Lindall Street)	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Residential Detached and Open Space and zoning designations of RS-4 (Single Family District 4), RP (Planned Residential District), and OS (Open Space District).
M1	Alicia Parkway at Highlands	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Open Space and zoning designation of OS (Open Space District).
M2	Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity	Proposed recycled water meter locations have a General Plan designation of Park & Recreation and zoning designation of PR (Park & Recreation District).
M3	Crown Valley Parkway at Adelanto	Proposed recycled water meter location has a General Plan designation of Open Space and zoning designation of OS (Open Space District).

The proposed project will comply with all applicable land use plans, policies or regulations with jurisdiction over the project. Thus, the proposed recycled water pipelines and meters would not conflict with any adopted plans for the three cities where the project is proposed. The facilities are proposed in areas where utilities are an allowable use. No impact is identified for this issue area.

c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? No Impact

As stated in Section IV, above, some of the project segments fall within areas that are covered by the Orange County-Central Coastal NCCP/HCP; however, MNWD is not a participating agency to this plan. No conflicts with any local biological resource protection regulations or NCCP/HCPs are expected, since the project does not impact wildlife corridors and potential indirect impacts to sensitive biological resources will be mitigated to below a level of significance. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

XI. MINERAL RESOURCES

a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state? No Impact

The proposed recycled water pipelines are proposed within roadway rights-of-way in urbanized areas. The pipelines are not proposed in areas that contain any identified mineral resources. Installation of the pipelines would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be a value to the region and the residents of the state, as no such resources are identified in the project area. No impact is identified for this issue area.

b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? No Impact

Installation of new recycled water pipelines would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan as no such resources are identified in the specific locations where the pipeline segments are proposed. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

XII. NOISE

a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? Less Than Significant Impact

Ambient noise in the project vicinity is primarily generated from vehicular traffic along various roads. Land uses in the vicinity of the proposed pipelines and meters are primarily residential uses with two schools and a community park near proposed work areas.

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines. Construction equipment anticipated to be used during project construction includes a back hoe, water truck, dump truck, paving equipment, and traffic control equipment. Construction at each site will vary from less than two weeks to six weeks. Equipment would be used intermittently, as needed for construction. It is not expected that all equipment would run continuously or simultaneously.

#12.

Construction activities would be required to comply with the requirements of the respective jurisdiction where the pipeline segments are proposed to be placed. Requirements, by jurisdiction, are shown in **Table 10**. Adherence to these requirements is also identified as project design features (Table 2) and would be included as part of the conditions for project approval.

Table 10. Construction Noise Requirements by Jurisdiction

City	Noise Requirements
Laguna Niguel	Construction, repair or maintenance of utility facilities shall occur between 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM, Monday through Saturday.
Laguna Hills	Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday.
Aliso Viejo	Construction shall occur between the hours of 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM on weekdays, and 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM on Saturday.

Source: City of Laguna Niguel Municipal Code Section 6-6-7, City of Laguna Hills Municipal Code Chapter 5-24, and City of Aliso Viejo Municipal Code Section 8.12.070.

MNWD notes that allowable construction hours for the contractor will be more restrictive than the hours listed above. Moreover, the contractor will be required to comply with each noise ordinance, as appropriate.

The majority of the pipes are proposed within roadways in residential areas. Since approximately 100 feet of pipeline construction will occur each day, individual residential receptors would be exposed to construction noise from trenching for a limited time (approximately one day) and construction noise levels would decrease for specific receptors as construction activities proceed along the pipeline routes. Although the noise could be temporarily disruptive, given that construction activities will occur only during permissible times for each jurisdiction and are short term in nature, impacts are less than significant.

Crown Valley Elementary School is located along Crown Valley Parkway and near one of the proposed meter locations. Classrooms are located over 150 feet from the proposed construction and this distance would attenuate any construction noise. Additionally, the classrooms have air conditioning so that windows can be closed, thus further reducing noise levels in the classrooms. Impacts would be less than significant.

In summary, all construction would be limited to the hours set by the respective cities (see Table 10). With adherence to the permitted construction noise requirements summarized in Table 10, project construction would not expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of applicable standards. Impacts would be less than significant.

b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? Less than Significant Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines and meters. Construction equipment anticipated to be used during project construction includes a back hoe, water truck, dump truck, paving equipment, and traffic control equipment. This equipment is not typically characterized as generating excessive groundborne vibrations or groundborne noise. Additionally, construction activities will be short-term in duration and will be limited to specific hours and days,

as defined by each city's municipal code. Therefore, impacts are determined to be less than significant.

c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? No Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines and meters. Once in place, there would not be any operational noise associated with the pipelines or meters. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? Less Than Significant Impact

As discussed in Section XII.a, construction of the project would not result in any significant temporary or periodic noise impact. Impacts would be less than significant. Further, construction activities will be short-term in duration and will be limited to specific hours and days, as defined by each city's municipal code. Therefore, impacts are determined to be less than significant.

e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? No Impact

The nearest airport to any of the proposed pipeline segments is John Wayne Airport, which is located over eight-and-a-half miles to the northwest of Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane). The project area is not within two miles of an airport to be included in an airport land use plan. Therefore, no impact is identified.

f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? No Impact

None of the recycled water pipeline segments are located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING

a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? No Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines. These pipelines will be placed at the termini of existing recycled water lines in areas that are already developed and served by MNWD with potable water. Implementation of the project would provide additional recycled water service, reducing the need for potable water resources. The project does not propose residential development, new roadways, or expanded infrastructure into undeveloped areas that would induce population growth. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

#12.

b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? No Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines. The pipelines would be installed below grade within existing roadway rights-of-way. No residential structures will be removed. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? No Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines. The pipelines would be installed below grade within existing roadway rights-of-way. Therefore, the construction would not result in the displacement of any people, nor would it necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere. No impact is identified for this issue area.

XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

a) Fire protection? Less Than Significant Impact

The project does not propose a use that would result in an increased demand for fire protection, such as residential or commercial uses. MNWD would coordinate with the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo to ensure that adequate access for emergency responders, including the fire department, would be maintained when portions of roadways may be closed for pipeline installation. This will primarily be achieved through the encroachment permit application review process. Additionally, prior to construction, MNWD would implement traffic control requirements identified in encroachment permits from the various cities and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals. Adequate emergency access will be maintained during project construction. Therefore, impacts related to fire protection would be less than significant.

b) Police protection? Less Than Significant Impact

The project does not propose a use that would result in an increased demand for police protection. MNWD would coordinate with the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo to ensure that adequate access for emergency responders, including police/sheriff, would be maintained when portions of roadways may be closed for pipeline installation. This will primarily be achieved through the encroachment permit application review process. Additionally, prior to construction, MNWD would implement traffic control requirements identified in encroachment permits from the various cities and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals. Adequate emergency access will be maintained during project construction. Therefore, impacts related to police protection would be less than significant.

c) Schools? No Impact

The project does not propose a use that would generate students. Therefore, no impact related to schools is identified for the project.

d) Parks? No Impact

The project does not propose a use that would generate additional residents that would result in an increased demand for parks. All pipelines would be located below grade within existing roadway rights-of-way. Two meters are proposed within Crown Valley Park Community Park, but they would be adjacent to existing water meters on site and would not impact any of the park use areas enjoyed by the public. In summary, no impact to park or recreation facilities would occur.

e) Other public facilities? No Impact

The project does not propose a use that would impact other public facilities that are not already considered in this analysis. Therefore, no impact related to other public facilities is identified for the project.

XV. RECREATION**a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? No Impact**

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines. The pipelines would be located below grade within existing roadway rights-of-way. The project does not propose a use that would generate additional residents that would result in increased use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities, such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? No Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines. The pipelines would be located below grade within existing roadway rights-of-way. The project does not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities, which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC**a) Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit? Less Than Significant Impact**

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines. The pipelines will be installed within existing roadway rights-of-way and will require temporary lane closures during installation. Lane closures at each of the pipeline segments, if needed, are anticipated to occur for a maximum of six weeks in any given location, and are typically only during construction hours. Any such closures

#12.

would generally be limited to a single lane and are not anticipated to result in complete closure of the roadway for vehicle traffic in either direction. Additionally, prior to construction, MNWD would implement traffic control requirements identified in encroachment permits from the various cities and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals. The traffic control approach will ensure that adequate traffic flow is maintained during project construction. Therefore, impacts will be less than significant.

Construction related traffic would be minimal and would include a back hoe, water truck, dump truck, paving equipment, and traffic control equipment. Some worker truck trips would also occur to get workers to and from the job site. It is expected that less than ten worker trips would occur. Given the large volumes of traffic that move along many of the roadways where pipelines are proposed, the contribution of these short term construction trips would be minor. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

Once the pipelines and meters are in place, operational trips would be limited to trips for emergency repair or replacement of equipment. Again, these occasional repair visits are not expected to contribute a significant amount of traffic to the local roadway network. Therefore, impacts are less than significant.

b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service (LOS) standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? Less Than Significant Impact

Although the project could require temporary lane closures that would result in a temporary increase in traffic on local roadways during construction, this short-term and limited construction-related traffic would not create a substantial impact on traffic volumes nor change traffic patterns in such a way as to affect the level of service on local area roadways. In addition, once built, the proposed pipelines and meters would be below the surface of the roadways and would not impact traffic on these roadways. Therefore, potential impacts would be less than significant.

c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks? No Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines and meters. The pipelines will be installed below grade and not located in areas that could impact air traffic patterns. The recycled water meters would be placed in subsurface meter boxes. The closest airport to any of the proposed pipeline segments is the John Wayne airport, which is over eight-and-a-half miles away from Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane). Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? No Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines and recycled water meters. The pipelines will be installed below grade within existing roadway rights-of-way, below travel lanes or any other areas that could pose a hazard to motorists. Additionally, MNWD will implement traffic control requirements identified in encroachment permits from the various cities and traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals. Traffic control will reduce construction-related traffic impacts to area residents. Therefore, no impacts are identified.

e) Result in inadequate emergency access? Less Than Significant Impact

Installation of the recycled water pipelines may require temporary lane closures. As mentioned previously, traffic control requirements will be implemented to ensure that adequate emergency access is maintained during project construction. Impacts are considered less than significant.

f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities? Less than Significant Impact

Several of the proposed pipeline segment locations are within roadways that have dedicated bicycle lanes. These include Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane), the Glenwood Drive portion of Segment 5 (Indian Creek), and Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway).

Orange County Transportation Authority has several bus routes that pass along streets within the project area. These include Routes 87, 89, 90, 187, and 188/A. None of these routes have stops immediately in front of areas where construction is proposed with the exception of Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway). One southbound transit stop for route 87 is located along the proposed pipeline segment alignment. As identified above in Table 2, the project contractor will coordinate with the Orange County Transportation Authority should construction activities impact this stop.

The project includes implementation of traffic control requirements identified in encroachment permits from the various cities. Additionally, traffic control will be performed per guidelines in WATCH and MUTCD manuals to ensure that adequate vehicle travel, bicycle travel, public transit, and emergency access are maintained during project construction. Thus bicycle safety and movement and public transportation routes along these roadways would be addressed and alternative routing or signage identified. Impacts would be less than significant.

XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS**a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board? No Impact**

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines and recycled water meters. MNWD has 22.7 million gallons per day (MGD) wastewater treatment capacity, 15.2 MGD recycled water treatment capacity, and a projected recycled water demand of 8.125 MGD. The project would not generate additional wastewater treatment demands. Therefore, the project would not result in an increase or exceedance of wastewater treatment requirements of the Santa Ana or San Diego RWQCB. No impact is identified for this issue area.

b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which would cause significant environmental effects. No Impact

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines and recycled water meters. As stated above, MNWD has 22.7 MGD wastewater treatment capacity, 15.2 MGD recycled water treatment capacity, and a projected recycled water demand of 8.125 MGD. The project would not generate additional wastewater treatment demands. The project would not result in the need to construct new water or wastewater treatment facilities. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

#12.

- c) **Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? No Impact**

The proposed pipelines will be installed below grade within roadway rights-of-way in urban areas that contain existing stormwater drainage facilities. Proposed recycled water meters would be placed below grade within meter boxes. The project would not require the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities. Therefore, no impact is identified for this issue area.

- d) **Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed? Less than Significant Impact**

The project proposes the installation of new recycled water pipelines. MNWD has 22.7 MGD wastewater treatment capacity, 15.2 MGD recycled water treatment capacity, and a projected recycled water demand of 8.125 MGD. The project would increase the supply of recycled water available for non-potable uses within the MNWD service area and would not increase the demand for water supplies. Therefore, a less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

- e) **Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? No Impact**

The project involves the installation of new recycled water pipelines. This activity would not generate additional wastewater treatment demands. The project does not propose any increase in population which would impact the wastewater treatment provider. No impact is identified for this issue area.

- f) **Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs? Less than Significant Impact**

The project involves the installation of new recycled water pipelines. The project will not require the demolition of existing structures, nor is it expected to create ongoing solid waste that would need to go to local landfills. Soil and rock material that is displaced during construction would be taken to an appropriate location. A less than significant impact is identified for this issue area.

- g) **Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste? Less than Significant Impact**

The cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo all have Construction and Demolition (C&D) Ordinances that require various levels of recycling and diversion for waste generated during new construction, addition or demolition projects. The project involves the installation of new recycled water pipelines. The project will not require the demolition of existing structures, nor is it expected to create ongoing solid waste that would need to go to local landfills. In the event that waste material is generated during construction, all waste would be handled in a manner that complies with federal, state and local statutes related to solid waste, including the C&D Ordinances of the respective cities. Impacts would be less than significant.

V. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following are Mandatory Findings of Significance in accordance with Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines.

- a) **Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated**

The potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory were considered in the response to each question in Sections IV and V of this form. In addition to project specific impacts, this evaluation considered the project's potential for significant cumulative effects. Resources that could potentially impacted by the project are related to biological resources (potential for indirect impacts to least Bell's vireo, coastal California gnatcatcher, MBTA-protected species and jurisdictional wetlands). However, mitigation has been included that reduces these effects to a level below significance (MM BIO-1A, BIO-1B, BIO-2, and BIO-3). These mitigation measures include preconstruction surveys for sensitive bird species if work is proposed during the breeding season, as well as supplemental mitigation such as noise attenuation if sensitive species are identified. Impacts to cultural resources were determined to be less than significant. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that, after mitigation, significant effects associated with this project would result. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

- b) **Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.) Less Than Significant Impact**

No concurrent construction activities are proposed by MNWD where the proposed pipeline segments and meters will be installed. The project is proposed in a heavily urbanized and built out area of Orange County. Additionally, due the short duration of project construction and the fact that all impacts are mitigated to below a level of significance, the project would not contribute significantly to a cumulative impact for any of the environmental issue areas analyzed in this document. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

- c) **Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? Less Than Significant Impact**

In the evaluation of environmental impacts in this IS, the potential for adverse direct or indirect impacts to human beings were considered in the response to certain questions in

#12.

Sections I. Aesthetics, III. Air Quality, VI. Geology and Soils, VIII. Hazards and Hazardous Materials, IX. Hydrology and Water Quality, XII. Noise, XIII. Population and Housing, and XVI. Transportation and Traffic. Implementation of mitigation measure MM GEO-1 will be required to ensure that the existing geofabric under Canyon Wren Lane will be appropriately handled during construction of the Canyon Wren Lane segment. As a result of this evaluation, there is no substantial evidence that there are adverse effects on human beings associated with this project. Therefore, this project has been determined not to meet this Mandatory Finding of Significance.

VI. PERSONS AND ORGANIZATIONS CONSULTED

This section identifies those persons who prepared or contributed to preparation of this document. This section is prepared in accordance with Section 15129 of the CEQA Guidelines.

A. MOULTON NIGUEL WATER DISTRICT

Eva Plajzer, P.E., Assistant Director of Engineering
Rodney S. Woods, P.E., Principal Engineer

B. CONSULTANTS

CEQA Documentation

Sophia Mitchell & Associates
Sophia Hahl Mitchell, Project Manager
Meghan Scanlon, Senior Environmental Analyst

Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas

Scientific Resources Associated
Valorie Thompson, Principal

Biological Resources

Rocks Biological Consulting
Melanie Rocks, Principal

Cultural Resources

ASM Affiliates
Sinead ni Ghabhlain, Principal

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IX. MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Moulton Niguel Water District

The following Mitigated Negative Declaration is being circulated for public review in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act Section 21091 and 21092 of the Public Resources Code.

Public Review Period: February 3, 2015 to March 5, 2015

Project Name: IRWM Recycled Water System Extension Project

Project Applicant: Moulton Niguel Water District, 27500 La Paz Road, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Project Location: The recycled water distribution system extension and recycled water meters will be located in the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo in Orange County, California.

Project Description: The project involves the installation of approximately 7,500 feet of PVC pipe within paved streets, ranging from 4- to 8-inches in diameter. The proposed recycled water pipelines will provide up to 102.3 acre-feet per year of recycled water in lieu of potable water to 12 recycled services in the Laguna Audubon Homeowner's Association (HOA) and 20 recycled services at various locations in the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo. A total of 32 recycled water meters will also be installed. Encroachment permits will be required from the cities of Laguna Niguel, Laguna Hills and Aliso Viejo.

Project construction is expected to begin in the fourth quarter of 2015 and will take approximately six to nine months to complete. The construction schedule assumes completion of approximately 100 feet of pipeline per day, plus a few days between construction of each segment for restaging construction equipment at the next work site. Only one segment would be under construction at a time. All pipelines will be placed under existing roadways. Trenching will occur within the roadway at an estimated width of 24 inches and approximately 60 inches (5 feet) deep. The segment along Canyon Wren Lane (Segment 1) will be placed approximately four feet deep between the upper and lower layers of existing geofabric material that is below a portion of the roadway. Once in place, the recycled water lines will be covered with a minimum of 48 inches of material and then the roadway would be repaved. Anticipated construction equipment for the project includes a back hoe, water truck, dump truck, paving equipment, and traffic control equipment. Construction staging would be confined to areas that are paved or disturbed.

X. FINDINGS

This is to advise that the Moulton Niguel Water District acting as the lead agency, has conducted an Initial Study to determine if the project may have a significant effect on the environmental and is proposing this Mitigated Negative Declaration based upon the following findings:

- The Initial Study shows that there is no substantial evidence that the project may have a significant effect on the environment and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- The Initial Study identifies potentially significant effects but:
 - (1) Proposals made or agreed to by the applicant before this proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration was released for public review would avoid the effects or mitigate the effects to a point where clearly no significant effects would occur.
 - (2) There is no substantial evidence before the agency that the project may have a significant effect on the environment.
 - (3) Mitigation measures are required to ensure all potentially significant impacts are reduced to levels of insignificance. Mitigation proposed for the project includes:

MM BIO-1A Least Bell's Vireo

The following mitigation measure is applicable to Segment 6 (Laguna Hills Alicia Parkway), M1 (Laguna Niguel Alicia Parkway) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity):

- Perform construction activities at Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) between August 1 and April 9 to avoid the least Bell's vireo breeding season (April 10 – July 31). If construction is necessary between April 10 and July 31, ensure that noise levels remain below 60 dBA hourly average with the assistance of a qualified acoustician. If noise levels greater than 60 dBA hourly average are proposed at Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) during the species breeding season, protocol surveys for least Bell's vireo shall be performed. If surveys are negative, no further action is needed. If positive, noise reduction measures and/or noise barriers shall be required during project construction activities from April 10 to July 31. If noise levels cannot be kept below 60 dBA hourly average between April 10 and July 31 at these segments, consultation and permitting through the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) shall be required.

MM BIO-1B Coastal California Gnatcatcher

The following measure would apply to Segment No. 7 (Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive):

- Perform construction activities at Segment 7 (Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive) between August 16 and February 28 to avoid the coastal California gnatcatcher breeding season (March 1 – August 15). If construction is necessary between March 1 and August 15, ensure

that noise levels remain below 60 dBA hourly average with the assistance of a qualified acoustician. If noise levels greater than 60 dBA hourly average are proposed at Segment 7 (Laguna Niguel South Peak Drive) during the species breeding season, protocol surveys for coastal California gnatcatcher shall be performed. If surveys are negative, no further action is needed. If positive, noise reduction measures and/or noise barriers shall be required during project construction from March 1 through August 15. If noise levels cannot be kept below 60 dBA hourly average between March 1 through August 15, consultation and permitting through USFWS shall be required.

MM BIO-2 Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The following mitigation measure applies to all proposed construction sites:

- Perform any necessary ornamental shrub or tree clearing between September 1 and January 14 in order to avoid the avian breeding season. Do not trim or clear any native trees (e.g., those that occur within areas identified as southern riparian scrub). If project construction requires tree or shrub removal or trimming during the typical bird breeding season (i.e., January 15 – August 31), or an active nest is noted, a pre-construction nest survey shall be required. If active nests are present, construction shall be delayed in the nest area plus an appropriate buffer (determined case by case) until the end of the breeding season or until the nest is no longer active.

MM BIO-3 Wetlands

The following measure would apply to Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity):

- If construction work, staging or other impacts are proposed or accidentally occur in southern riparian scrub habitats, consultation and permitting with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), a division of the State Water Resources Control Board, shall be required. Pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), USACE is authorized to regulate any activity that would result in the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the U.S. (including wetlands and non-wetlands/other waters of the U.S.), which include those waters listed in 33 CFR 328.3. Additionally, a water quality certification or waiver pursuant to Section 401 of the CWA is required for all Section 404 permitted actions. The RWQCB provides oversight of the 401 permit process in California and is required to provide “certification that there is reasonable assurance that an activity that may result in the discharge to waters of the United States will not violate water quality standards.” Pursuant to Division 2, Chapter 6, Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code (CFG), CDFW regulates all diversions, obstructions, or changes to the natural flow or bed, channel or bank of any river, stream or lake that supports fish or wildlife. A Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement Application must be submitted to CDFW for “any activity that may substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow or substantially change the bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake.”
- Install construction fencing (e.g., orange snow fencing or similar) at Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) under the supervision of a qualified biologist prior to and maintain during all

#12.

construction work, including equipment and materials delivery. Ensure that the defined work area and all fencing is entirely within developed areas (e.g., sidewalks, streets) or ornamental landscaping. Provide training for Segment 6 (Alicia Parkway), M1 (Alicia Parkway at Highlands) and M2 (Crown Valley Community Park and Vicinity) construction personnel regarding habitat sensitivity and direct that all equipment, dirt spoils, etc. be kept entirely within the fenced work limit.

MM GEO-1 Geofabric on Canyon Wren Lane, Aliso Viejo

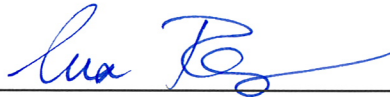
To address the potential for soil instability, a 250-foot portion of proposed Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane) shall be installed between the upper and lower layers of existing geofabric material. Construction shall include excavation of approximately 10 feet wide by four feet deep of compacted soils to allow the geofabric to be rolled out of the way. The geofabric must not be severed. Once Segment 1 (Canyon Wren Lane) is installed, this portion of Canyon Wren Lane shall be reconstructed pursuant to the Canyon Wren Street Distress Rehabilitation detail sheet prepared by GMU Geotechnical, Inc. (**Appendix E**). This includes protecting in place existing recycled and domestic waterlines, air-vac assembly, and two-inch irrigation meter to re-establish their connections per MNWD standards. The reconstruction of Canyon Wren Lane shall be completed to the satisfaction of the City Engineer and Director of Public Works of the City of Aliso Viejo.

A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.

If adopted, the Mitigated Negative Declaration means that an Environmental Impact Report will not be required. Reasons to support this finding are included in the attached Initial Study. The project file and all related documents are available for review at the Moulton Niguel Water District, Engineering Department, 26161 Gordon Road, Laguna Hills, CA 92653.

3-11-15

Date of Determination



Eva Plajzer, P.E., Assistant Director of Engineering

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