

28. FIRE PROTECTION (A – DISTANCE AND RESPONSE TIME, AND B – PERSONNEL, EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES)

Setting: Fire Protection is provided to the Oak Park community by the Ventura County Fire Department. The closest fire station is No. 36 located at 855 North Deerhill Road, Oak Park, CA 91377. The next two closest fire stations which could provide backup response are the Westlake and Civic Center Stations located at 151 Duesenburg Drive and 325 West Hillcrest Drive respectively, both in the City of Thousand Oaks.

According to the *Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area Fire Management Plan* (March 2006, updated June 2007), all wildland fires in the Santa Monica Mountains will be suppressed by the local suppression agencies, including the Los Angeles City Fire Department, Los Angeles County Fire Department and Ventura County Fire Department, with support from the National Park Service, California Department of Parks and Recreation and the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.

Impact Discussion: The County of Ventura Initial Study Guidelines thresholds state that project distance from a full time paid fire department is considered a significant impact if the project is in excess of five miles. Additionally, projects may have a significant impact if additional personnel, equipment or facilities are required. The proposed project may result in calls for service during the decommissioning of the water infrastructure; however, the project site is within the service area of the fire suppression agencies as described above and no requirement for additional personnel or facilities is anticipated. Therefore, the proposed short-term project impact would be less than significant. (See Section C. 30, Recreation for a discussion of possible fire starts associated with the proposed project.) The project would not create a demand for long-term fire protection. Therefore, no project-specific or cumulatively significant fire protection impacts are anticipated.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts: No mitigation is required as no significant impacts would result.

29. EDUCATION (A – SCHOOLS AND B - LIBRARIES)

Setting: Public Education in the Oak Park community is provided by the Oak Park Unified School District. District facilities and their location within Oak Park are listed below.

- Oak Park Unified School District: District Office - 5801 Conifer Street
- Oak Park Neighborhood School (preschool) - 1010 Kanan Road
- Oak Hills Elementary - 1010 Kanan Road
- Brookside Elementary School - 165 Satinwood Ave
- Red Oak Elementary - 4857 Rockfield Street
- Medea Creek Middle School - 1002 Doubletree Rd,
- Oak Park High School - 899 N. Kanan Road

Library service is provided through the Ventura County Library system. The Oak Park Library is located at 899 North Kanan Road. The proposed project site locations presently do not generate a demand for school or library service.

Impact Discussion: The Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines thresholds state that a project would normally have a significant impact on school facilities if it would substantially interfere with the operation of an existing school or library facility, or would put additional demands on a school district or library which is currently overcrowded. The proposed project is not in close proximity to existing school or library facilities. Therefore, decommissioning activities would not have a direct impact on these facilities. Due to the nature of the project, which would not include development of housing or commercial/industrial facilities, no direct increase in population would result from the proposed project. Therefore, the proposed project is not expected to cause an increase in the demand for schools or libraries over the long-term. The minimal number of persons required for implementation of decommissioning activities are not expected to move to the area. Therefore, no impacts on educational services would result. Since the proposed project would not have an impact, it would not contribute to any cumulative impacts to school and library facilities.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts: No significant impact would result; therefore, no mitigation is required.

30. RECREATION (A, B AND C)

Setting: Outdoor recreation in natural open space provides opportunities for: the enjoyment of scenic beauty; activities such as healthful exercise (e.g., walking, hiking, horseback riding, biking and jogging); and learning about and enjoying nature. One of the key purposes of planned public open space systems is to allow for the development of trails that provide people access to areas of open space for their enjoyment.

The Lindero Feeder crosses parkland within the SMMNRA (partially under ownership and management of the NPS, and partly under the ownership of the SMMC and management of the MRCA). A small western portion of the pipeline crosses parkland owned and managed RSRPD. A description of open space and recreational facilities of the project area and the administering agencies is provided as follows.

In 1978, Congress established the SMMNRA as part of the National Park System. The SMMNRA is a cooperative effort that joins federal, state and local park agencies with private preserves and landowners to protect the natural and cultural resources of this transverse mountain range and seashore. In the Santa Monica Mountains, the SMMNRA extends from Point Mugu east to the Cahuenga Pass, including the Mulholland Scenic Parkway. The territory also includes the principal wildlife corridor between the Simi Hills and Santa Monica Mountains. Comprised of more than 153,075 acres, the SMMNRA is the world's largest urban national park (SMMC web site, February 2009). The SMMNRA is nationally significant because it protects the greatest expanse of mainland Mediterranean ecosystems in the National Park System which is among the world's rarest and most endangered ecosystems. The mission goals of the SMMNRA as identified in the SMMNRA General Management Plan and Environmental Impact

Statement (July 2002) include, but are not limited to the following which are of particular significance relative to the proposed project:

- The protection and enhancement of species, habitat diversity and natural process;
- Maintenance or improvement of water quality and management of water environments for their significant ecological value;
- Preservation of the cultural history of the Santa Monica Mountains; and
- Creation of an enjoyable and safe experience for visitors.

According to NPS staff (Smeck, written communication March 2007), Simi Hills parkland covers over 16,000 acres of protected open space – an area that rivals the combined acreage of Point Mugu State Park and the NPS's Circle X Ranch. There are 50 miles of public trails through the parkland. The Simi Hills offer some of the best parkland views and provide visitors a place to realize physical and emotional benefits. Visitation to the trails of the SMMNRA tops 550,000, with Cheeseboro Canyon/Simi Hills one of the most popular sites. Visitors range from tourists from other countries to repeat visitors from local communities. The Simi Hills are an area of national significance that is uniquely available to and greatly enjoyed by the residents of surrounding communities.

The NPS oversees the SMMNRA, but currently has direct responsibility for only about 15 percent of the land within the boundary. The NPS is a partner sharing stewardship with the public, other agencies, and private landowners. NPS provides for the operation, maintenance, resource management, education and resources and visitor protection on all NPS lands.

The SMMC was established by the California State Legislature in 1980 to complement the zoning power of local governments. The SMMC's mission is to strategically buy back, preserve, protect, restore, and enhance treasured pieces of Southern California to form an interlinking system of urban, rural and river parks, open space, trails, and wildlife habitats that are easily accessible to the general public. The SMMC is not a park management agency although it has helped to preserve over 60,000 acres of parkland. The MRCA is the land management arm of the SMMC created under a Joint Powers Agreement in cooperation with several local park agencies.

The SMMC and MRCA along with the NPS, the USDA Forest Service, State Parks, County, City and other local park agencies such as the RSRPD work together to provide recreational opportunities and cultural activities in the Los Angeles Metropolitan Area and greater surrounding mountain regions.

Parks, open space and recreational trails within the community of Oak Park are under the jurisdiction of the RSRPD. The RSRPD is a special district formed by vote of the people in 1961 (RSRPD web site, November 2006). The total area served by the RSRPD includes 113 square miles which is bound by the Ventura County line on the east and south, extends west to

the edge of the city limits of the City of Moorpark, and north to the Oak Ridge area of the Santa Susana Mountains. RSRPD manages 3,378 acres of park and public open space lands, of which 594 acres are developed, 446 acres are undeveloped; and 2,338 acres are public open space (to be left in a natural state).

There are a number of recreational trails in the immediate vicinity of the proposed project site. These trails are illustrated on Figure 7 and include:

- Doubletree Connector (unlabeled but identified in yellow on the figure);
- Palo Comado Canyon Trail;
- Ranch Center Connector;
- Cheeseboro Canyon Trail;
- Cheeseboro Ridge Trail; and
- Upper Las Virgenes Canyon Trail.

Impact Discussion: The County of Ventura Initial Study Guidelines thresholds state that a project will have a significant impact on recreation if it would cause an increase in the demand for local or regional parks and related facilities when measured against standards provided in the Guidelines. Additionally, a project will have a significant impact on recreation if it would impede future development of recreation-parks facilities and/or regional-trails/corridors.

During the decommissioning activities several short-term recreational impacts would result. Visitors using the trails that are proposed to be used as haul routes for the decommissioning would be subject to potential safety and nuisance impacts (dust/exhaust and noise). Biological resources of the SMMNRA and RSRPD open space may be impacted. (This effect is discussed in Section C.6, Biological Resources of this Initial Study). Use of torches and equipment that could be the source of fire starts is a hazard. (This potential impact is addressed in Section C.17, Fire Hazards of this Initial Study.) The aesthetic quality of the open space recreational area would be adversely affected on a temporary basis. (This potential effect is addressed in Initial Study Section C.8, Visual Resources.) As a result of these project-related effects, the proposed project is considered to have a potentially significant short-term impact on recreation which may be considered to be cumulatively significant as well should the project occur at the same time as the Cheeseboro Canyon Trailhead Enhancement Project.

The proposed project is not expected to cause an increase in demand for recreational facilities including parks and trails, as no housing or commercial/industrial development would be constructed, and therefore no direct or indirect increase in population would result from the proposed project. Additionally, the construction employees are not expected move to the area and create additional demands on recreational facilities and no new permanent employees are necessary.

The Ventura County thresholds indicate that a project will have a significant impact on recreation if it would impede future development of recreation-parks facilities and/or regional-trails/corridors. Upon completion, the proposed project would enhance the recreational open space of the SMMNRA through the removal of obsolete, above-ground potable water infrastructure including the 4 million-gallon capacity Cheeseboro Reservoir, Palo Comado Pump Station and above-ground features along the Lindero Feeder. Additionally, the easements to these areas would be turned over to the appropriate open space management agencies. This is considered a long-term beneficial impact of the proposed project.

The pipeline and other subsurface features would remain within the recreational property and would become the responsibility of the respective open space management agencies. With the passage of time, and without the aboveground landmark features that presently assist in the identification of the water infrastructure, future land managers for the open space agencies could have difficulty determining the location of the residual water system infrastructure. To prevent and detect the development of any potential hazards associated with future deterioration of the infrastructure (e.g. failure of a manhole cover seal), the relocation of the facilities in the field would be essential. Unless the District provides adequate information to assist the open space management agencies locate and identify the remaining project infrastructure, significant long-term hazards to humans and animals may develop.

Mitigation and Residual Impacts: The following measures have been identified by the NPS.

- R1** Decommissioning activities within public open space should be performed during the week to avoid the peak visitation on weekends.
- R2** Trails associated with the haul routes should be closed to the public during construction days. A schedule of proposed closure dates shall be developed in coordination with NPS and RSRPD. Public notices shall be posted in advance of commencement of decommissioning letting the public know the general timeframe during which the trails will be closed temporarily at short notice for activities involving heavy equipment movement on the access routes.

In addition to the above measures, the NPS has stated that increased ranger patrol shall be scheduled for the days when trails will be closed and significant construction work will be occurring. It is anticipated that NPS would implement this measure as it was developed by their Environmental Review Team as part of their compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

The measures identified above in addition to those identified in Initial Study Sections C.3., Air Quality; C.6., Biological Resources; Section C.8, Visual Resources; and Section C.17, Fire Hazards would reduce short-term recreation-related impacts to a less than significant level.

The following measure has been developed in coordination with the NPS to reduce potential long-term impacts to recreation to a less than significant level.

- R3** The District shall be responsible for collecting Global Positioning System (GPS) points for the pipeline appurtenances with an accuracy level of +/- 10 feet. The data shall also include metadata for each appurtenance to convey type and purpose, i.e. "manhole", "manhole to access underground vault that houses line valves", "air-vac", etc. The GPS data shall be conveyed to NPS staff who maintain the park's Geographic Information System.
- R4** The District shall provide copies of any "As Built" plans of project infrastructure that it may have in its possession or may be able to obtain from Calleguas Municipal Water District to the NPS.

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