



## **NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

### **DWR East Branch Extension Phase II Project EIR**

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**To:** Calif. Office of Planning and Research  
Responsible and Trustee Agencies  
Other Interested Parties

**Subject:** Notice of Preparation of Environmental Impact Report

**Project:** East Branch Extension Phase II Project

**Lead Agency:** Department of Water Resources

Pursuant to Section 15082(a) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Department of Water Resources (DWR) will be the lead agency in preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the East Branch Extension Phase II project. DWR requests your agency's views, relating to your agency's statutory authority, as to the scope and content of the environmental analysis to be included in the EIR. DWR has concluded that the project could potentially result in significant environmental impacts and therefore is preparing an EIR.

Pursuant to Section 15103 of the CEQA Guidelines, your response to this Notice of Preparation (NOP) must be received no later than thirty (30) days after receipt of this notice. The public comment period on the NOP will close May 4, 2007. Should you have any questions regarding the project or NOP, please contact Department of Water Resources, c/o Tom Barnes. Please mail your written response including any comments you may have on this project to:

Department of Water Resources  
c/o Tom Barnes  
707 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1450  
Los Angeles, CA 90017

In order for the public and regulatory agencies to have an opportunity to ask questions and submit comments on the scope of the EIR, a scoping meeting will be held during the NOP review period. The scoping meeting will include a brief presentation providing an overview of the proposed project. After the presentation, oral comments will be accepted. Written comment forms will be supplied for those who wish to submit comments in writing at the scoping meeting; written comments may also be submitted during the NOP review period.

The scoping meeting will be held as follows:

**Wednesday, April 18, 2007 at 7:00 pm**  
**San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District**  
**1350 South "E" Street**  
**San Bernardino, CA 92408**

**Project Location:** The project site is located in western San Bernardino County within the communities of Redlands, Mentone, and Highland (see Figure 1). Land uses in the project area include residential, business/commercial, agricultural, industrial, open space, and public facilities.

**Project Background and Need:** In 1994, the San Gorgonio Pass Water Agency (SGPWA) completed an EIR for the Water Importation Project to construct facilities to import State Water Project (SWP) water, store water in underground aquifers, and provide treated water to its service area. In 1995 the SGPWA requested that DWR consider implementation of an extension to the East Branch of the California Aqueduct. In 1997, a Supplemental EIR was prepared by DWR evaluating Phase I of the East Branch Extension Project including the Greenspot Pump Station, Crafton Hills Pump Station, Cherry Valley Pump Station, Crafton Hills Reservoir, Pipeline Reach 1, Pipeline Reach 2, and Pipeline Reach 3. Phase I also provided water to the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District service area. The Supplemental EIR described Phase II as part of the overall project, but indicated that the specifics of construction would be evaluated in the future.

Construction of Phase II of the East Branch Extension would facilitate importation of SWP water into the SGPWA service area to replenish groundwater basins that have been declining since the 1920's in the Beaumont Storage Unit. The proposed project would allow the SGPWA to receive its longstanding contractual entitlement of 17,300 acre feet of water from the SWP for use for groundwater recharge and replenishment, and for distribution of water to retail water purveyors throughout the SGPWA service area. In addition, the proposed project would provide greater system operating flexibility by providing water storage facilities.

**Project Description:** The East Branch Extension Phase II would connect the San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District's (SBVMWD) Foothill Pipeline near the intersection of Cone Camp and Greenspot Roads with the Crafton Hills Pump Station located near Mill Creek Road. The proposed project would involve construction of approximately six miles of 72- and 78-inch pipeline, construction of a reservoir providing 525 to 950 acre-feet of storage, construction of a new pump station, and expansion of the existing Crafton Hills Pump Station (see Figure 1). With implementation of the proposed project, the capacity of the East Branch Extension would increase from 50 cubic feet per second (cfs) to 150 cfs.

### ***Pipeline Alignments***

The EIR will analyze three different pipeline alignments: Alternative 1 (the preferred alignment), Alternative 2, and Alternative 3. All alignments would begin at the Foothill Pipeline, adjacent to the Foothill Pump Station, and terminate at Crafton Hills Pump Station.

**Alternative 1** would extend south, parallel to the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California's (MWD's) recently installed Inland Feeder pipeline. The pipeline would cross the Santa Ana River and continue along the northern and eastern boundary of a parcel presently developed as a citrus orchard. The pipeline would then extend east, terminating at Crafton Hills Pump Station. Roadways affected by Alternative 1 include: Greenspot

Road, Cone Camp Road, Opal Avenue, Wabash Avenue, San Bernardino Avenue, Turquoise Street, Amethyst Street, Garnet Street, Sycamore Street, and Valalla Lane.

**Alternative 2** would be similar to Alternative 1 except that the northern portion of the north-south alignment would be located to the east. The east-west portion of Alternative 2 would be further south than Alternative 1. Roadways affected by Alternative 2 include: Greenspot Road, Cone Camp Road, Opal Avenue, Wabash Avenue, Crafton Avenue, Madeira Avenue, Amethyst Street, Garnet Street, Sycamore Street, and Valalla Lane.

**Alternative 3** would be similar to Alternative 1 except that the east-west portion would extend from the northeast corner of the citrus orchard and continue along the Mill Creek levee. Roadways affected by Alternative 3 include: Greenspot Road, Cone Camp Road, Opal Avenue, Wabash Avenue, Amethyst Street, Garnet Street, and Valalla Lane.

### ***Citrus Reservoir***

Citrus Reservoir, providing 525 to 950 acre-feet of storage, would be constructed within an existing citrus orchard north of San Bernardino Avenue. The reservoir surface area would range from approximately 20 acres to 35 acres. The reservoir would provide operational storage for water delivered by gravity through the Foothill Pipeline and East Branch Extension Phase II pipeline.

### ***Citrus Pump Station***

The proposed pump station with ultimate capacity of 200 cfs would consist of a 5,000 square-foot two-story structure adjacent to Citrus Reservoir. The pump station would pump water from Citrus Reservoir through the proposed easterly pipeline to the Crafton Hills Pump Station. A switchyard and air chambers would also be constructed adjacent to the pump station.

### ***Crafton Hills Pump Station Expansion***

An annex to the Crafton Hills Pump Station would be constructed to contain three new 25 cfs pumps and an additional forebay tank.

### ***Construction***

The infrastructure would be constructed in phases over an approximate 4 to 5-year period. Construction activities for installation of the new pipelines, storage reservoir, and pump station may consist of open trenching in city streets, county roads and open space areas, and grading for reservoir and pump station sites. Construction at Citrus Pump Station will include extension of an existing Southern California Edison electric transmission line into the site to power the pump station.

**Issues to Be Addressed In the EIR:** The EIR will evaluate potential impacts of the proposed project including construction and operation of the water pipelines, storage reservoir, pump station, and expansion of Crafton Hills Pump Station. The EIR will discuss alternatives to the proposed project including the No Project Alternative. Alternatives may be added based on input received during the NOP review period and/or input provided at the scoping meeting. Information to be included in the EIR will incorporate input and comments received during the NOP review period and/or received from the scoping meeting. Decision-makers, responsible and trustee agencies under CEQA, property owners,

and interested parties will also have an opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR after it is published and circulated for public review.

**Discussion of Potential Impacts:** The EIR will assess short-term construction impacts as well as longer term direct, indirect, and cumulative effects. The following sections summarize potential effects of the project to be evaluated in the EIR.

**Aesthetics:** Construction of Citrus Reservoir and pump station would have the potential to alter the visual character of the site, which is currently a citrus orchard. The reservoir may also require occasional nighttime security lighting. The EIR will assess these potential impacts and identify mitigation measures if necessary to minimize the effects.

**Air Quality:** Construction activities would consist of excavation and open trenching. Construction emissions would be generated from construction equipment exhaust, earth movement, construction workers' commute, and material hauling for the entire construction period. The project's construction emissions could adversely affect the regional air quality within the South Coast Air Basin. The EIR will estimate daily exhaust and fugitive emissions based on detailed construction activities by project phasing to assess the potential long-term and short-term air quality impact. The EIR will identify sensitive receptors within the project area that could be adversely affected by the project construction. If necessary, measures to mitigate impacts to minimize their significance will be developed or recommended for implementation.

**Biological Resources:** Construction of the pipelines would occur in areas that may consist of natural habitats that support federally or state-designated sensitive plant and/or animal species pursuant to the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) or California Endangered Species Act (CESA). The EIR will evaluate potential impacts of the project on sensitive habitats and species. Mitigation measures will be developed if necessary to minimize potential adverse effects of the project.

**Cultural Resources:** Excavation for proposed facilities could encounter previously unknown archaeological and paleontological resources. The EIR will evaluate the potential impacts of the project on archaeological and paleontological resources. The EIR will identify project design alternatives, as necessary, as well as mitigation measures if necessary to minimize impacts to cultural resources.

**Geology, Soils, Seismicity and Mineral Resources:** The project area is located within alluvial deposits associated with the Santa Ana and Mill Creek drainages. The project area is also located in a seismically active region of California. Seismic activity associated with primary faults within the region could cause considerable ground shaking in the project area. The EIR will evaluate the potential hazards associated with ground shaking and flooding from the proposed project and identify mitigation measures, as necessary, to minimize impacts from those hazards.

**Growth Inducement:** The project would increase capacity of the East Branch Extension and support growth in the SBVMWD and SGPWA service areas. The EIR will evaluate the project's relationship to regional growth and will identify the adverse effects of growth. The

EIR will identify responsible agencies and regional mitigation plans prepared to minimize the effects of growth.

**Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** Construction activities could encounter soils and groundwater contaminated by neighboring industrial uses including leaking underground storage tanks. The EIR will assess the potential for encountering contaminated soils and groundwater and other hazardous materials and will develop measures to ensure that any contaminated soils or hazardous materials encountered during construction would be handled in accordance with applicable regulations.

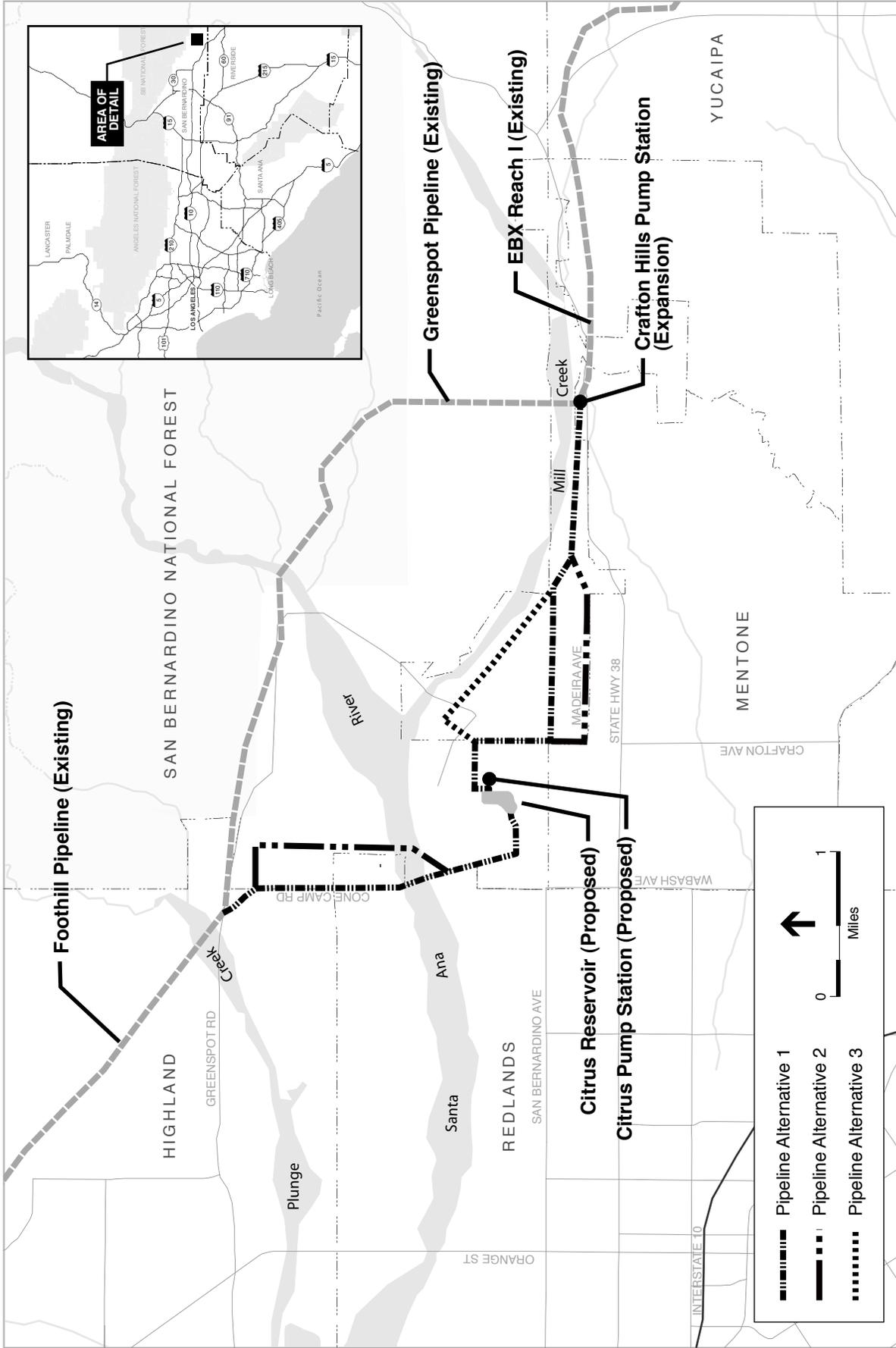
**Hydrology / Water Quality:** The proposed project would require excavation of soils and work within streambeds and percolation ponds. Excavation and construction activities could affect storm water quality. The EIR will identify storm water quality protection measures required during construction activities. The EIR will identify mitigation measures, as necessary, to minimize hydrology and water quality impacts.

**Land Use, Planning and Recreation:** The proposed project would result in long-term impacts to agricultural land. Construction activities associated with the project would result in short-term disturbances to adjacent land uses. The EIR will identify the project's potential effects on land uses and will evaluate the project's consistency with local planning efforts and compatibility with neighboring land uses (i.e., residential, commercial, agricultural etc.). The EIR will identify mitigation measures, as necessary, to minimize any significant land use impacts.

**Noise:** Construction activities associated with the project would generate short-term noise that could affect nearby residences and businesses. Construction activity would be required to comply with local noise ordinances. The EIR will evaluate the proximity of sensitive land uses with noise-generating activities associated with construction and with long-term operation of the proposed pump station and pump station expansion. The EIR will identify mitigation measures, as necessary, to minimize impacts.

**Traffic and Transportation:** Excavation activities associated with the proposed project would temporarily disrupt traffic on roadways, potentially affecting bus routes and emergency vehicle access routes. Open trenching within city streets and county roads would require temporary lane and intersection closure. The EIR will describe the duration and extent of impacts on the roadways affected by the proposed project. The EIR will also evaluate potential impacts to parking. The EIR will identify mitigation measures if necessary to minimize potential adverse effects.

**Utilities and Public Services:** Excavation within city streets and county roads would encounter underground utilities. Local service could be temporarily disrupted during construction. In addition, emergency service providers could be affected by temporary lane and intersection closures. The EIR will evaluate the project's potential to affect utilities and public services and will identify mitigation measures if necessary to minimize the effects.



DWR - East Branch Extension NOP - 206008  
**Figure 1**  
 Proposed Facilities

SOURCE: Street Map USA; ESA, 2007.