

# EMERGENCY STORAGE PROJECT OLIVENHAIN DAM COMMUNITY UPDATE SUMMARY

**DATE:** June 11, 2003

**TIME:** 7 p.m.

**ORGANIZATION:** Del Dios Town Council

**MEETING LOCATION:** Del Dios Fire Station

**PRESENTERS:** Bruce Bennett, Washington Infrastructure  
Jim Prine, EDAW  
Tim Smith, San Diego County Water Authority

**STAFF RESOURCES:** Kathy Schuler, Joe Bride and Alex Newton, San Diego County Water Authority; Bruce Bennett, Washington Infrastructure; Jim Lindell, MWH Americas, Inc.; Rebecca Cole, Katz & Associates

## **PRESENTATION SUMMARY:**

### **Update Presentation on the Olivenhain Dam**

Bruce Bennett provided a brief update on construction activities at the Olivenhain Dam. He indicated electrical and mechanical work on the Inlet/Outlet tower is nearly complete, geomembrane lining on the upstream side of the dam is under way and will be completed in September 2003, the downstream control facility will be completed in late July and the Hodges Headworks will be completed early August 2003. He indicated the pump station is on schedule to be finished in January 2004, and the clearing for the surge control facility will start soon.

### **Questions and Comments Asked During the Meeting Related to the Olivenhain Dam:**

#### **Q: When will the reservoir be full with water?**

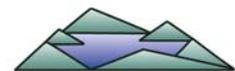
A: The reservoir is expected to be filled with water in May 2004.

#### **Q: Where does the water come from that is used to fill the dam?**

A: Water travels from the Colorado River and the California State Water Project to the Water Authority's second aqueduct.

#### **Q: Can you explain the geomembrane lining?**

A: The lining is a heavy polyvinyl liner about ¼" thick. It is plastic-like on one side, with a soft cloth on the other. The strong liner protects water from leaking after an earthquake.



**Olivenhain Dam**

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**Q: Why will it take so long to fill the dam?**

A: The dam will be filled slowly in 30-foot increments to allow for monitoring after each fill. We want to ensure everything is working properly.

**Presentation on Landscaping Plans for the Olivenhain Dam**

Jim Prine from EDAW described the landscaping plans for the downstream side the Olivenhain Dam. He explained there are landscape conditions in the Emergency Storage Project's Environmental Impact Report that must be met. He stated slopes at the bottom of the dam are visible to Mt. Israel residents. Trees will be planted on the slopes in front of the dam to visually enhance the area and help partially screen the dam. A temporary irrigation system will be installed to help establish the tree plantings. In all, approximately 160 to 190 trees will be planted. Jim indicated he is in the beginning stages of developing a plan, which will take approximately two months and the plan will be implemented next fall. Jim presented two landscape alternatives for the community to consider:

1. Plant all coast live oak trees, similar to those planted along the fire station. These trees would grow and top out at 50- to 75-feet high.
2. Mix in natural California sycamores and/or pine trees, such as Torrey pines.

\*\*[Post Meeting Note: In August 2003, the Water Authority commissioned a security analysis of the facilities and operations of dam area. This analysis concluded that a fencing and a security buffer zone downstream of the dam needs to be created requiring reexamination of the landscaping plan.]

**Questions and Comments Asked During the Meeting Related to the Olivenhain Dam**

**Landscaping:**

**Q: Are pines fire resistant?**

A: Pines are flammable, but if buried in the right place, they will not send off cinders that spread fires.

**Q: What is the height of the various trees you discussed?**

A: Oaks will grow to 60 feet, sycamores will grow from 60 to 100 feet, and Torrey pines will grow 60 to 80 feet.

**Q: How long does it take for an oak tree to grow 50 feet?**

A: It would take 30 to 40 years.

**Q: How much will the landscaping cost?**

A: We have not yet estimated the cost of the landscaping.

**Q: What about hiking? Will you limit the Crest-to-Coast Trail?**

A: Yes. The trail goes through the planned construction area.

**C: In my experience, torrey pines burn hot and oaks char. I recommend sycamores and oaks.**

**Q: Are you required to plant only native trees?**

A: That is the plan.

**Q: Regarding sycamores, we had a speaker to our group once who said sycamores can grow fast in the first year if planted in small pots - about 36 inches - is this true?**

A: Sycamores do have a higher survival rate if potted in smaller plants.

**Q: Has anyone considered painting a mural on the face of the dam visible to Mt. Israel residents?**

A. No. The face of the dam has been treated with a desert varnish stain to blend better with the surrounding environment.

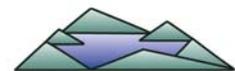
**C: I love the horse wall.**

**Q: What about using cottonwood trees?**

A: Cottonwoods are not as tall, and the water demands for this type of tree are great.

### **Presentation on the Lake Hodges Projects**

Tim Smith, project manager for Lake Hodges Projects, provided a project status update on the Lake Hodges Projects before taking questions from the community. He reviewed the current water level and preliminary plans with the group using maps, and reiterated construction will begin 2006 and be complete in 2008. When the project is complete, the Water Authority will maintain the



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lake's water level of elevation 296 in the winter months. Tim indicated the planning phase for the pump storage project to capture energy is complete, and the size of the facility will be reduced from that originally planned for the Emergency Storage Project. Lake Hodges fact sheets were distributed to all in attendance.

**Questions and Comments Asked During the Meeting Related to Lake Hodges Projects:**

**Q: Why will the lake be so low in the winter?**

A: To allow Lake Hodges to capture rainfall.

**Q: Will Lake Hodges ever fill completely by natural rainfall?**

A: That is hard to predict.

**Q: What is the dam's elevation?**

A: The top of the dam is elevation 315.

**Q: Is the map you are showing us to scale?**

A: Yes.

**Q: Will the trail cross over the pipe?**

A: Yes, the pipe will be underground.

**Q: Where is the top of the outlet?**

A: It will be 15 feet below the lowest water elevation in winter.

**Q: How long will disruption to the trail be?**

A: Two years.

**Q: Will hikers be able to walk through the trail at all? Can the trail be left open during various times during construction?**

A: Yes, however, the trail cannot be open during site work and inlet/outlet construction.

**Q: What will happen to the large sycamore in the canyon?**

A: We will evaluate the option of saving or relocating the tree.

**Q: Have you noted the location of the tree (referenced above)?**

A: Yes we have.

**Q: How close is it to the pipe?**

A: About 100 feet.

**Q: Can you include specifications in construction documents that specify saving the tree?**

A: We will evaluate that.

**Q: Can you hire an arborist to assist with trying to save the tree?**

A: Yes. We will contract with a California Certified Arborist to evaluate the options of saving the tree.

**C: Will you commit to either boxing or saving the tree?**

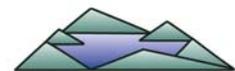
A: Yes.

**Q: How far below Del Dios Highway will the pipe run?**

A: Approximately 100 to 150 feet below Del Dios Highway.

**Q: How will you tunnel under the highway?**

A: We will use a tunnel boring machine, also known as a TBM.



**Olivenhain Dam**

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**Q: Will you bore in both directions?**

A: We will drill in the direction toward the Olivenhain Dam.

**Q: How will the Inlet/Outlet pipe affect recreation users on the lake?**

A: We may use buoys around the pipe as a cautionary measure.

**Q: If a kayaker gets too close, will there be danger during the pumping?**

A: No.

**Q: Will neighbors of the lake or passersby hear the flow of water? Will residents feel vibrations?**

A: Water will flow 100 feet to 150 feet underground, so no noise will be heard or vibrations felt.

**Q: Will we hear noise from the pump station?**

A: Yes. As stated in the project's EIR, the County of San Diego requires sound not to exceed 55 decibels at the edge of the property line. Much noise will be lost because it will be underground, making it surmountable to comply with the 55 decibel level.

**Q: How long will it take to transport the muck? How will that be done?**

A: As described in the EIR, muck will be transported for the two-year construction period. At peak times, approximately four trucks an hour will be needed.

**Q: What will hours of operation be for muck transportation?**

A: Hauling will likely occur Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.

**Q: What route will trucks use?**

A: The audience was presented a drawing illustrating the two muck/haul routes currently being considered (one utilizing Rancho Drive, one utilizing Lake Drive). It is likely the Rancho Drive route will be used, which is the route identified in the EIR.

**Q: What will happen to all the trees currently growing in Lake Hodges?**



A: The City of San Diego, San Diego County Water Authority and San Dieguito Water District/Santa Fe Irrigation District are collaboratively reviewing the situation.

**Q: Will residents hear noise from the tunnel boring machine?**

A: There may be some vibrations during construction in areas where the tunnel boring machine is 100 to 150 feet underground. In deeper areas, vibrations should not be felt.

**Q: What percent of time will be spent generating electricity?**

A: That depends on agreements with agencies who want to purchase power. We plan to generate approximately six hours during the day, Monday through Saturday, and pump approximately eight hours a day at night seven days a week.

**Q: Will we hear noise from the pumping?**

A: The pump station will be located behind a knoll to block sound, however noise may be heard from the lake. The turbines will be 70 feet underground, which will reduce noise. Noise will not exceed the County's 55 decimal limit at the property line.

**Q: Will the power lines be above ground? If so, why?**

A: Yes, all Emergency Storage Project power lines are located above ground. We will use four steel poles versus 10 wooden poles. Since the Emergency Storage Project must be operational after an earthquake, its imperative for crews to be able to access the power lines to make any repairs. If they were underground, repairs could take weeks; being above ground would take only hours.

**Q: Are steel poles taller and larger?**

A: Just slightly taller.

**Q: Will power generate in both directions?**

A: No, only when water goes from Olivenhain Reservoir to Lake Hodges.

**Q: How long will it take for the Water Authority to break even?**

A: Depends on the Power Purchase Agreement currently being negotiated with several electrical agencies

**Conclusion**

Tim concluded by saying the next time the Water Authority team plans to meet with the council will be following the 30 percent design that will be complete in late September 2003. At that meeting, he will bring the map back with the location of the sycamore tree identified. He said he has met with and will continue to meet with the Cains (residents who reside at the intersection of Lake Drive and Rancho Drive) and the City of San Diego about project-related issues.

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