

EMERGENCY STORAGE PROJECT LAKE HODGES PROJECTS COMMUNITY UPDATE SUMMARY

DATE: March 10, 2004

TIME: 7:00 p.m.

ORGANIZATION:

Del Dios Town Council

MEETING LOCATION:

Del Dios Fire Station

PRESENTERS:

Jim Lindell, MWH Americas, Inc.
Tim Smith, SDCWA

STAFF RESOURCES:

Annie Kaskade, SDCWA
John Crayton, SDCWA
Alex Newton, SDCWA
George Johnson, Jacobs Civil.

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Jim Lindell provided a summary update on the Lake Hodges Projects. He informed the group that the project design had reached 60 percent completion. Jim displayed a three-dimensional architectural rendering of what the pump station would look like. He explained that spoils from the tunnel would be used to build the elevated graded area for the switchyard, adjoining the pump station. Jim pointed out that this design change would reduce truck traffic, as less dirt/rock will be required to be hauled away.

Jim described the pump station as mostly underground with the final building having a maximum height of 25 feet. Jim explained that the pump station operational noise will be minimal because most of the equipment is well below ground, buried in concrete. He indicated that power lines will be above ground and will run up the hill behind the Nordstrom's house along three or four power poles. The power lines must be above ground because this project is part of the Emergency Storage Project, and as such the lines need to be immediately accessible for expeditious repair in case of emergency.

Jim described the electric switchyard that would be co-located with the pump station, as small (a 69-kV switchyard, similar to the switchyard at the Olivenhain Pump Station). A berm will be built to shield the switchyard from view and will be landscaped. The exterior of the pump station will be painted "desert varnish" to blend in with the terrain.

A final decision has not been made on how much fencing around the facilities will be required.

The final alignment of the tunnel has not changed. There are two options for tunnel sizes depending on the contractor's equipment availability. The larger tunnel size would improve system operation and allow flexibility for future expansion of the facility from a 40-MW facility to a 90-MW facility. At this time, the Water Authority has no plans to expand the facility.

Questions and Comments Made During the Meeting:

Q: Is it possible to have a parallel pipe with a fire hydrant at this end to help us with fire prevention?

A: You should check with your local water agency. The Water Authority doesn't sell water to local residents, only water districts.

Q: How will the dirt be moved out?

A: All material will be trucked off site along the unimproved portion of Lake Drive, then up Rancho Rd. to Del Dios Highway.

Q: What about making a route on the City property directly from Del Dios Highway to the pump station?

A: There is an elevation drop off of approximately 180 feet, so a new road would need to follow the contours of the hill back and forth to allow provide adequate turning radius and grade for construction vehicles. More importantly, the construction of a new road would be a significant environmental impact that hasn't been addressed in the EIR for the project. The EIR for the project identifies the current planned route as least impactful overall to the area.

Q: Why can't the City build the access road?

A: The City could decide to build an access road as described. However, the Water Authority cannot require the City to build the road as part of the Lake Hodges Projects, because of the reasons described previously.

C: The City and the Water Authority should at least have a dialogue; it's City property and they can waive the environmental review process. If the City could build the road it would benefit everyone. When the project is done there will be a new road to the aquatic and recreation area and the Water Authority would have its haul road during the project. Please make an attempt to dialogue with the City about this!

A: The City has been informed of alternative access road suggestions by the public in project coordination meetings. The Water Authority would be glad to facilitate a direct meeting between the City and interested community members. Before the next quarterly meeting, we will have a special meeting with City representatives and the San Dieguito River Park JPA. We will let you know when the meeting is scheduled and those who are interested can attend.

Q: Has anyone thought about a conveyor system to run the dirt and muck up the hill to a staging area off Del Dios Highway? You could stockpile the dirt during the day, and then bring in trucks equipped with hospital mufflers to haul it out at night.

A: There are projects where miles of conveyors remove dirt. It's a good system under certain circumstances, and the suggestion is appreciated. That would be a contractor decision, however, since we cannot stipulate means and methods for the contractor to remove the muck. A new route for the conveyor would need to be cleared through environmentally sensitive habitat and property rights would need to be acquired from the City. Loading of muck in the road shoulder of Del Dios Highway would have to be reviewed and approved by the County of San Diego. Also, changing the working hours and adding environmental impacts to those not specified in the EIR would result in a substantial change to project impacts and would thus impact the project schedule.

Q: Will there be a stoplight at Del Dios Highway and Rancho Rd.?

A: Yes. We intend to put in a temporary light during construction. We are coordinating this with the County of San Diego Traffic Department.

C: We don't want it. More traffic will detour through Lake Drive during rush hour if you put in a light.

C: The Water Authority appreciates your feedback. Comments in previous community meetings have indicated that the community is supportive of installation of a temporary traffic light at Del Dios Highway and Rancho Drive. This new direction is noted for communication to the traffic control portion of the design team.

Q: Does the EIR provide for a tunnel that is horizontal?

A: No. The vertical alignment of the tunnel was not specified. We want competition between contractors when bidding, and the vertical alignment of the tunnel will depend on the tunnel excavation method used, so it will not be decided until bids are received.

Q: Is the tunnel sealed and lined? Will there be space between the pipe and the tunnel?

A: The tunnel is expected to be either 10-foot or 12-foot inside diameter, depending on the contractor's selected method of construction and on whether the Water Authority will construct a tunnel that improves system operation and allows flexibility for future expansion of the pump station from a 40-MW to a 90-MW facility. Space between the pipeline and the tunnel will be filled with grout.

Q: What about future expansion? Are the impacts even covered in the EIR?

A: We talked about this before. There is value to generating electricity for the region and part of the study was to look at future expansion of the facility. There is no intent to expand at this time, but the Water Authority's Board may decide to

allow this option to improve system operation and for flexibility to expand in the future. At this time it is a break-even economical option. The post-EIR assessment indicated reduced impacts with the larger tunnel when compared with the original tunnel planned in the ESP EIR.

Q: If you can build either size tunnel, doesn't that mean the equipment is either undersized or oversized because of the hydraulic variations?

A: It is true that pipeline diameter affects the system hydraulics. However, the possibility of either diameter (10-ft. or 12-ft. inside diameter) has been incorporated into the equipment design, and equipment will operate with reasonable efficiencies. Note that the equipment is already subject to operational changes because the reservoir levels in Olivenhain Reservoir and Lake Hodges will fluctuate; this too has been incorporated in the design.

C: We think you want to expand it and if you build a larger tunnel (12-ft. diameter), it will just open the door for the next project.

A future project would be separate from the current Lake Hodges project. Energy prices would have to make the expansion economically viable, which is not forecasted to occur in the immediate future. Furthermore, if the Board were to approve an expansion, the permit process alone would be expected to take three years because the increased generation capacity would cause the facility to be subject to additional regulatory review. Regardless of the likelihood of a potential future expansion of the facility, there are currently no plans to expand.

Q: Are you going to empty the lake when you start work?

A: No. We just need it to be at elevation 290 feet.

Q: How are you going to prevent local wells from being impacted? I am concerned that fissures created by blasting will cause my well water to be drained via the tunnel.

A: The Water Authority has located and evaluated all County permitted wells in the area. So far we don't expect any impacts to the existing wells as a result of tunnel construction. Well water cannot drain via the tunnel because it is not an open conduit and the pipeline is under pressure and sealed in grout.

Q: Can you tell us the date when the public access to the Lake/Rancho Trail System will be closed?

A: The overall construction at the site is expected to be start in late 2005 and last two years. We are trying very hard to limit the time that the trails are closed to the public. We're looking at relocating the trail temporarily closer to the lake during construction and to minimize the time it's closed by adding a fence so that it can be accessible during construction of the pump station after initial site grading and construction of the inlet/outlet structure.

Q: Will there be a stop sign at the bottom of Rancho Drive?

A: We are currently working with the County of San Diego Traffic Department on this issue. We have suggested a three-way stop at the intersection of Rancho Drive and Lake Drive.

The community members and town council were advised that the next update would be in June 2004, and those who are interested would be invited to sit in on a dialogue between the Water Authority and City of San Diego regarding the City's desire to construct an alternate route for access to concessions at Lake Hodges.

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