



WATER RESOURCES AGENCY

MEMORANDUM

Monterey County

DATE: June 15, 2011

TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Brent Buche, Chief of Operations & Maintenance
SUBJECT: Salinas River Channel Maintenance Program Update

This is an update of activities related to the Salinas River Channel Maintenance Program (CMP) that have occurred since the last update to the Agency Board of Directors (BOD) in December 2010.

Scope of Work

There are some proposed changes to the scope of work for the contract with Cardno ENTRIX to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). A new scope of work and budget will be prepared and brought before the BOD for approval.

The document to be prepared will only be an EIR, not a joint EIS/EIR. The Army Corps of Engineers recommended not conducting the EIS in order to remain within the Nationwide permitting classification. Therefore, the project will move forward with satisfying California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) compliance with the preparation of an EIR. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance will be addressed at a later time with most likely an Environmental Assessment (EA).

Staff has determined the need to add three tributaries of the Salinas River, to the CMP. Those tributaries or laterals are the San Lorenzo Creek, Bryant Canyon Channel, and the Gonzales Slough. The areas of work on the three tributaries are all located within Agency zones and have been historically maintained by the Agency.

Additional studies and reports will need to be performed in order to complete the EIR. Some of those include: an economic analysis, biological surveys, and Greenhouse gas emissions analysis.

Public Scoping Period

A Notice of Preparation was circulated in April to over 200 agencies and individuals. The notice was also posted downtown at the courthouse, on the Agency's Website, and a summary was provided in several newspaper publications. The notice provided a description of the Program, location of Program activities, a range of possible project alternatives, and the resources and environmental concerns planned for analysis in the EIR. The notice requested that comments on the content of the EIR and potential Program alternatives be submitted to the Agency within 30 days of receipt. The Agency held two public scoping meetings during the public comment

period, one in Salinas and one in Soledad.

The Agency received comments through May 27th and is currently reviewing and analyzing the comments with the consultant so that the preparation of the Draft EIR can begin.

Technical Analyses

Cardno ENTRIX has prepared a preliminary map and report of the native and non-native riparian vegetation along the Salinas River. This will identify the distribution and abundance of native and other non-native vegetation along the Salinas River in the project area.

Cardno ENTRIX staff has begun work on the Salinas River Flood Capacity Modeling. LiDAR data is anticipated this summer which would expand the area of possible flood modeling capabilities and allow the modeling to move forward.

Next Steps

- Finalize the Project Description and alternatives to be analyzed in the EIR
- Update the scope of work and budget
- Commence additional technical analyses
- Meet with Responsible Agencies and discuss the project and alternatives

Budget

- Over \$400,000 spent this fiscal year (through April)
- Next fiscal year has \$370,000 budgeted