

**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE****Department of the Army, Corps of Engineers****Availability of the Joint Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report (DEIS/ EIR) for the Santa Fe and Whittier Narrows Dams Water Conservation and Supply Study, Los Angeles County, California**

**AGENCY:** U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), Los Angeles District, DOD.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has prepared a joint DEIS/EIR and Feasibility Report with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works (LACDPW) for the Santa Fe and Whittier Narrows Dams Water Conservation and Supply Study, in Los Angeles County, California. Santa Fe and Whittier Narrows Dams are two of the five Federal flood control dams in the Los Angeles County Drainage Area. Santa Fe Dam is located in the northeastern San Gabriel Valley on the San Gabriel River about four miles below the mouth of San Gabriel Canyon. Bordering communities include Irwindale, Baldwin Park, Duarte, and Azusa. Whittier Narrows Dam is located approximately seven miles downstream of Santa Fe Dam and spans both the San Gabriel River and the Rio Hondo. Flood control is the primary purpose for both dams. A water conservation pool has been authorized at Whittier Narrows Dam at elevation 201.6 feet. No water conservation pool currently exists at Santa Fe Dam. Both dams also include extensive recreational facilities and wildlife management or nature study areas. The proposed action considered in this DEIS/EIR involves the temporary storage of water in the reservoirs at Santa Fe and Whittier Narrows Dams after the main flood season has passed during the flood season when flood forecasting predicts that there would be no reasonable expectation of additional rainfall at the end of a storm. The stored water would be released at a slower rate to recharge for spreading basins associated with each dam. The proposed water conservation project would not reduce the effectiveness of either dam to provide flood protection.

The preferred alternative at Santa Fe Dam would establish a buffer pool and seasonal pool at elevation 463.0 feet. Historic records indicate that inundation at elevation 463.0 feet is frequent enough to provide substantial water yields for cost-effective downstream ground water discharge. An

interior levee would be constructed to protect recreation and Wildlife Management areas from inundation. The bottom of the levee would be at elevation 446.8 feet nearest the toe of the dam, and the top of the levee would be at elevation 466.0 feet. The top of the levee would be armored to eliminate the need for overtopping protection. The average annual water yield increase for this alternative is estimated at 2,400 acre feet (AF).

The preferred alternative at Whittier Narrows Dam would use the existing 201.6-foot elevation water conservation pool for water conservation whenever significant amounts of water are available and not precluded by other constraints. In addition, a buffer pool and seasonal pool would be established at elevation 209 feet. Protective measures for motors at the water reclamation plant and mitigation for 18 oil wells would be included. Approximately 951 feet (331 Meters) of Durfee Road would need to be raised to elevation 212 feet, which includes three feet for overtopping protection, to maintain traffic flow when water is stored at the maximum seasonal or buffer pool elevation. The average annual water yield increase for this alternative is estimated at 3,500 AF.

Anticipated significant environmental impacts include loss of alluvial scrub habitat at Santa Fe Dam and increased sedimentation at Whittier Narrows Dam. These impacts would be mitigated. No significant environmental health effects are expected to occur.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For further information on the Draft Feasibility Report, please contact Ms. Deborah Lamb, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, Attn: CESPL-PD-WA, P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, California, 90053-2325, telephone (213) 452-3798. For further information on the Draft EIS/EIR, please contact Ms. Lois Goodman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CESPL-PD-RL, P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, California, 90053-2325, telephone (213) 452-3869.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Army Corps of Engineers has prepared a Draft EIS/EIR to assess the environmental effects associated with the proposed water conservation and supply at Santa Fe and Whittier Narrows Dams. The public will have the opportunity to comment on this Draft EIS/EIR before any action is taken to implement the proposed plan.

The Army Corps of Engineers conducted a scoping meeting prior to preparing the in the city of El Monte Draft EIS/EIR to aid in determining the significant environmental issues

associated with the proposed action. The meeting was held in the city of El Monte, California, on March 23, 1995.

The Army Corps of Engineers will conduct a public hearing to receive comments on the Draft EIS/EIR in conjunction with the public meeting to present the Feasibility Report. The public hearing and meeting will take place at the El Monte Community Center, 3130 Tyler Avenue, El Monte, California, on August 12, 1998 from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. The location, date, and time of the public hearing and meeting will also be announced in the local media, and separate notice will be sent to all parties on the project mailing list.

Individuals and agencies may present oral or written comments relevant to the Draft EIS/EIR by attending the public hearing or by mailing comments to the Corps prior to August 28, 1998. Comments, suggestions, and requests to be placed on the mailing list for announcements should be sent to Ms. Lois Goodman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CESPL-PD-RL, P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, CA 90053-2325.

*Availability of the Draft EIS/EIR:* Copies of the Draft EIS/EIR are availability for review at the following locations:

- Baldwin Park Community Library, 4181 Baldwin Park Blvd., Baldwin Park, California
- Pico Rivera Community Library, 9001 Mines Avenue, Pico Rivera, California
- El Monte Community Library, 3224 Tyler Avenue, El Monte, California
- Norwood Public Library, 4550 N Peck Road, EL Monte, California
- South El Monte Community Library, 1430 N. Central Avenue, South El Monte, California
- Duarte Community Library, 1301 Buena Vista Street, Duarte, California
- South Whittier Community Library, 14433 Leffingwell Road, Whittier, California
- Azusa City Library, 729 N. Dalton Avenue, Azusa, California
- Irwindale Public Library, 5050 North Irwindale Avenue, Irwindale, California
- West Covina Public Library, 1601 West Covina Parkway, West Covina, California
- Los Angeles Public Library, Central Library, 630 W 5th Street, Los Angeles, California
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, Environmental Resources Branch, 911 Wilshire Boulevard, 14th Floor, Los Angeles, California
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Works, Planning Division, 900 South Fremont Avenue, 11th Floor, Alhambra, California

To obtain a copy of the Draft EIS/EIR, please contact Ms. Deborah Lamb, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, Attn: CESPL-PD-WA, P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, California, 90053-2325, telephone (213) 452-3798. Please address written comments on the Draft EIS/EIR, to Ms. Lois Goodman, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Los Angeles District, Attn: CESPL-PD-RL, P.O. Box 532711, Los Angeles, California, 90053-2325, Fax number (213) 452-4204.

Dated: July 7, 1998.

**Robert L. Davis,**

*Colonel, Corps of Engineers, District Engineer.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

### Department of the Navy

#### Record of Decision for the Disposal and Reuse of the Department of Defense Housing Facility Novato, California

**SUMMARY:** The Department of the Navy (Navy), pursuant to Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. § 4332(2)(C), and the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality that implement NEPA procedures, 40 CFR Parts 1500-1508, hereby announces its decision to dispose of the Department of Defense Housing Facility (DoDHF) at Novato, California.

Navy intends to dispose of the property in a manner that is consistent with the Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan dated October 1995, as revised in November 1996 (Revised Reuse Plan). These plans address reuse of both DoDHF and the Department of the Army's adjacent Hamilton Army Airfield (HAA). The Hamilton Reuse Planning Authority (HRPA), the Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) for the DoDHF property, prepared both the October 1995 Reuse Plan and the November 1996 Revised Reuse Plan. The City of Novato approved the Revised Reuse Plan in February 1996 and published it in November 1996.

The Revised Reuse Plan Alternative, identified in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) as the Preferred Alternative, would implement the Revised Reuse Plan. The Preferred Alternative proposes an adaptive reuse of certain DoDHF buildings and the retention of existing land uses, *i.e.*, residential areas, community facilities, commercial activities, parkland, and open space.

In deciding to dispose of DoDHF Novato in a manner consistent with the

Preferred Alternative, navy has determined that a mixed land use will meet the local economic redevelopment goals of providing housing and recreational resources while also limiting adverse environmental impacts and ensuring land uses that are compatible with adjacent property. This Record Of Decision does not mandate a specific mix of land uses. Rather, it leaves selection of the particular means to achieve the proposed redevelopment to the acquiring entity and the local zoning authority.

#### Background

The Department of Defense Housing Facility at Novato is located in the southeastern part of the City of Novato in Marin County, California, about 20 miles north of the City of San Francisco. The property covers an area of about 411 acres on two sites that are separated by United States Highway 101.

The 304-acre Main Site is located on the east side of U.S. Highway 101 and contains military family housing, a Commissary, a Navy Exchange, an Officers Club, community service areas, a bowling alley, and recreational fields. The 107-acre Rafael Village military family housing site is located on the west side of U.S. Highway 101, about one mile northwest of the Main Site. The 142-acre Spanish Housing area lies adjacent to the Main Site and was formerly part of the Main Site. Navy will transfer this property to the United States Coast Guard (Coast Guard).

The Hamilton Reuse Planning Authority developed a reuse plan for DoDHF Novato in October 1995. This plan, designated the Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan, addressed reuse of both DoDHF and the adjacent Army Airfield. The Hamilton Army Airfield Reuse Plan proposed adaptive reuse of most of the existing housing and other buildings and retention of the existing land uses.

The Reuse Planning Authority revised the original HAA Reuse Plan to take account of changes in the Coast Guard's request for an interagency transfer of base closure property at DoDHF. The Revised Reuse Plan developed by HRPA incorporated the Coast Guard's revised request. It was approved by the City of Novato in February 1996 and published in November 1996. The Revised Reuse Plan, described in the FEIS as the Revised Reuse Plan Alternative, is the Preferred Alternative. The Department of the Army issued the Record Of Decision for the disposal and reuse of Hamilton Army Airfield on February 24, 1997.

Under the authority of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment Act of

1990, Public Law 101-510, 10 U.S.C. 2687 note, the 1993 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission recommended disestablishment of the Navy Public Works Center, San Francisco Bay, which included DoDHF Novato. The recommendation was approved by President Clinton and accepted by the One Hundred Third Congress in 1993. Navy closed the housing facilities at Novato on September 30, 1996.

During the Federal screening process for the Novato housing facilities, two Federal agencies, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the United States Coast Guard, expressed interest in property at DoDHF. The Department of Veterans Affairs initially requested an interagency transfer of 54 housing units at the Main Site but later withdrew its request. The Coast Guard, in its revised request, sought 282 housing units at the Spanish Housing area of the Main Site, and Navy will transfer the 142-acre property that contains these units to the Coast Guard. The remaining property is surplus to the needs of the Federal Government.

Navy published a Notice Of Intent in the **Federal Register** on October 31, 1995, announcing that Navy would prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to analyze the impacts of disposal and reuse of the land, buildings, and infrastructure at DoDHF Novato. A public scoping meeting was held at San Marin High School in Novato on November 16, 1995, and the scoping process ended on December 1, 1995.

On January 31, 1997, Navy distributed a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) to Federal, State, and local agencies, interested parties, and the general public. Navy held a public hearing concerning the DEIS on February 27, 1997, at San Marin High School. During the forty-five day review period after publication of the DEIS, Federal, State, and local agencies, community groups and associations, and the general public submitted oral and written comments concerning the DEIS. These comments and Navy's responses were incorporated in the Final Environmental Impact Statement and was distributed to the public on November 21, 1997, for a thirty-day review period that concluded on December 22, 1997. Navy received five letters concerning the FEIS.

#### Alternatives

NEPA requires Navy to evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives for the disposal and reuse of this Federal property. In the NEPA process, Navy analyzed the environmental impacts of