



S T A F F R E P O R T

DATE: SEPTEMBER 30, 2008
**SUBJECT: INITIAL STUDY AND PROPOSED MITIGATED NEGATIVE
DECARATION**

**PROJECT NAME: ALISO CREEK URBAN RUNOFF RECOVERY, REUSE,
AND CONSERVATION PROJECT**

FROM: MIKE DUNBAR, GENERAL MANAGER

**FISCAL IMPACT: ✓Yes. The system would cost the District approximately
\$300,000 per year. This could be offset by increasing
the recycled water rate by 10%.**

PROJECT SUMMARY: The District proposes to capture and reuse up to 800,000 gallons per day (gpd) of urban runoff in Aliso Creek in Laguna Beach, California. The recovered urban runoff collected by the Aliso Creek urban runoff recovery, reuse and conservation project will be treated and reused by combining the water with recycled water produced at the Advanced Wastewater Treatment (AWT) System at the Coastal Treatment Plant (CTP). There will be an improvement to the water quality of the combined supply, making the AWT recycled water more usable as well as increasing the overall recycled water supply for South Laguna and Dana Point. Downstream improvements in water quality are expected at Aliso Beach County Park because a portion of the urban runoff will be removed from Aliso Creek and constituents removed from the runoff water will be discharged in the CTP outfall, approximately 8,000 feet offshore at a depth of approximately 170 feet. Removal of a portion of the urban runoff will also help to reduce excessive stream flow from urbanized areas and help to return stream flows in lower Aliso Creek to more natural levels.

The project area is within the Aliso Creek Watershed downstream of the Aliso and Wood Canyons Wilderness Park and is approximately 1.5 miles from the confluence of the creek into the Pacific Ocean at Aliso Beach County Park, a popular beach destination and water sport location.

The water intake equipment will be located near the bridge that provides access to the CTP. Urban runoff water will be recovered from Aliso Creek using a self-priming centrifugal pump with a self-cleaning intake screen mounted next to an existing concrete apron. The stream banks at this location are protected from erosion by concrete and rip-rap. The water intake pump will be secured by bolts to the existing concrete apron and will not require alteration of the streambed.

The water will be treated with a reverse osmosis (RO) and a filtration package system to provide recycled water with a lower TDS content than is currently available to recycled water customers. Water treatment equipment will be located on an existing asphalt pad adjacent to the AWT disinfection system. The end-product water will be stored for use in the recycled water system and delivered in accordance with all requirements of the AWT's existing permits for the delivery and use of recycled water.

The following environmental documentation, permits and approvals may be required for implementation of the proposed project:

- California Fish and Game Streambed Alteration Agreement.
- California Coastal Commission, Coastal Development Permit
- CRWQCB Ocean Discharge Permit (Addendum)
- CRWQCB Recycled Water Permit (Amendment)
- State Water Resources Control Board Application to Appropriate Water
- County of Orange Encroachment Permit

NEED FOR CEQA REVIEW: Construction of the proposed project has the potential for environmental impacts and this action would constitute a project under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requiring environmental review by SCWD. In accordance with CEQA (Public Resources Code Sections 21 00021 177) and pursuant to Section 15063 of the California Code of Regulations (CCR), the SCWD, acting in the capacity of Lead Agency, has undertaken the preparation of an Initial Study to determine if the proposed project would have a significant environmental impact.

INITIAL STUDY SUMMARY: In accordance with CEQA the Initial Study included a review of the potential environmental impacts associated with approval of the project including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts. The Initial Study concluded that the project is not likely to have any significant impacts if proposed mitigation measures are implemented.

PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION: Staff has prepared a Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration with a Mitigation and Monitoring Plan.

PUBLIC REVIEW: The District prepared and circulated a Notice of Public Review and Intent to Adopt a Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration ("Notice"). The following public notices or actions were taken to provide for public input on the proposed action:

- Published Notice in OC Register (August 7, 2008)
- Mailed Notice to all property owners within 300 feet of the project (August 7, 2008)
- Posted Notice with the County Clerk (August 7, 2008)
- Provided Notice to interested parties (August 7, 2008)
- Provided a public review period of 30 days after the Notice was posted with County (August 8 to September 8, 2008).
- During the public review period copies of the initial study, checklist and discussion of impacts were maintained at the District office and on the District website for public review.
- Prepared responses to all comments received.

- Conducted a public hearing to receive verbal comments from the public (September 30, 2008).

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Notice of Public Review and Intent to Adopt a Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration
2. Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration
3. Mitigation and Monitoring Plan
4. Initial Study
5. Comment letters
6. Responses to comments.

RECCOMENDED ACTION: That the Board of Directors approve the following actions to comply with the requirements of CEQA: adopt the Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration; approve the Mitigation Measures and Monitoring Plan; and direct staff to File the Notice of Determination