



**PUBLIC WORKS AGENCY
TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
Traffic, Advance Planning & Permits Division**

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: May 29, 2009

TO: RMA – Planning Division
Attention: Laura Hocking

FROM: Nazir Lalani, Deputy Director

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF DOCUMENT 09-021 Newhall Ranch Resource Management & Development Plan and the Spineflower Conservation Plan.

Notice of Availability and Public Hearing for an Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report.

Located in Santa Clara River Valley in northwestern Los Angeles County (LA Co).

Lead Agency: **U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and California Department of Fish and Game.**

Pursuant to your request, the Public Works Agency -- Transportation Department has completed the review of the Notice of Availability (NOA) and Public Hearing for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)/Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Newhall Ranch Resource Management & Development Plan (RMDP) and the Spineflower Conservation Plan (SCP). The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and California Department of Fish and Game (DFG) have prepared a draft EIS/EIR for consideration of the Newhall Land and Farming Company's request for federal and state permits, agreements, and authorizations to implement the Newhall Ranch RMDP and the SCP. The RMDP (a conservation, mitigation, and permitting plan for sensitive biological resources within the previously approved Newhall Ranch Specific Plan area) would be relied upon to obtain federal and state permits to implement infrastructure improvements required to facilitate build-out of the approved Specific Plan and is intended to direct both resource management and development on the Specific Plan site. The SCP is a conservation and management plan to permanently protect and manage a system of preserves designed to maximize the long-term persistence of the San Fernando Valley spineflower, a federal candidate and a state-listed endangered plant species; to authorize the take of spineflower located outside designed preserves; and to address known spineflower within the applicant's land holdings located within the Specific Plan area and two adjacent areas, the Valencia Commerce Center and Entrada planning areas. The RMDP includes development-related infrastructure projects in the Santa Clara River and its tributary drainages which includes:

- Bridge and Road Crossing Culverts
- Bank Stabilization
- Drainage Facilities
- Water Quality Control Facilities
- Tributary Drainages
- Utility Corridor Crossings
- Temporary Haul Routes for Grading Equipment
- WRP Outfall Construction Activities
- Roadway Improvements to SR 126
- Maintenance Activities
- Recreation Facilities
- Geotechnical Investigation Activities

This joint EIS/EIR has been prepared at the direction of the USACE and DFG to analyze the direct, indirect, secondary, and cumulative impacts of the proposed RMDP/SCP, including impacts associated with project-specific infrastructure improvements and maintenance activities in or adjacent to the Santa Clara River and its tributaries located within the approved Specific Plan site. The project is located in a portion of the Santa Clara River Valley in northwestern Los Angeles County, between the city of Santa Clarita and the Los Angeles County/Ventura County jurisdictional boundary line.

2

We generally concur with the comments in the NOA and the Draft EIS/EIR for those areas under the purview of the Transportation Department. We have no additional comments at this time. Please provide us a copy of the final EIS/EIR for our review and possible comments.

3

Our review is limited to the impacts this project may have on the County's Regional Road Network.

Please contact me at 654-2080 if you have questions.

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**018. Letter from Ventura County Public Works Agency, Transportation Department,
dated May 29, 2009**

Response 1

This comment indicates that the Ventura County Public Works Agency -- Transportation Department has reviewed the Notice of Availability and Public Hearing prepared for the Draft EIS/EIR. The comment also summarizes various Project-related components evaluated by the Draft EIS/EIR. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) appreciate the comment provided. It will be included as part of the record and made available to decision makers prior to a final decision on the proposed Project. Because the comment does not address the adequacy of the environmental analysis provided by the Draft EIS/EIR, no additional response is provided.

Response 2

This comment summarizes the purpose of the Draft EIS/EIR and describes the location of the proposed Project. The Corps and CDFG appreciate the comment provided. It will be included as part of the record and made available to decision makers prior to a final decision on the proposed Project. Because the comment does not address the adequacy of the environmental analysis provided by the Draft EIS/EIR, no additional response is provided.

Response 3

This comment indicates that the Transportation Department generally concurs with the comments in the Notice of Availability and the Draft EIS/EIR related to areas under the purview of the Department. The Corps and CDFG appreciate that your department generally concurs with the information presented in the Draft EIS/EIR. Your comment will be included as part of the record and made available to decision makers prior to a final decision on the proposed Project. A copy of the Final EIS/EIR will be made available to your department.