

**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT  
for proposed activities on Corps-managed Federal land**

**Proposal Name:** Amendment to Lease DACW 09-1-67-51 in the Prado Basin, Riverside County, California and Issuance of Lease to the City of Riverside.

**Proposed Implementation Date:** January 1, 2012

**Proponents:** City of Corona / City of Riverside

**Location:** Prado Dam Flood Control Project, Riverside County, California; more specifically identified as 2201 Railroad St., Corona, CA 92880 / 3900 Main Street, Riverside, CA 92522

**County:** Riverside

**I. Background**

In May 1967, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) issued a lease to the City of Corona, DACW 09-1-67-51 that includes permission to operate and maintain the Clearwater Wastewater, Biosolids, and Cogeneration Facilities (Facilities).<sup>1</sup> The City of Corona recently declared the cogeneration portion of the plant (the “Clearwater Cogeneration Facility”) surplus to its needs and entered into a purchase and sale agreement (Agreement) for the disposition of the facility with the City of Riverside.

The property currently leased to the City of Corona, and described more specifically in Attachment A, is a small subsection of lands along the southeast outer edge of the Prado Basin, a Federally authorized flood risk management project, in Riverside County, California. It is immediately surrounded by disturbed vacant lands to the north and east, and by properties developed with industrial uses to the south and west. Access to the site is from Railroad Street, a fully developed urban street to the south. The Corona Municipal Airport lies beyond, approximately 0.3 mile to the northeast. A recently constructed earth berm outside the leased area, to the northwest and northeast, separates the site from the flood risk management facilities.

The Property supports the facilities described briefly above: the City of Corona’s Wastewater Treatment Plant #1, built in 1968, and the Biosolids and Cogeneration Facilities, built in 2005 pursuant to the terms of the lease, DACW 09-1-67-51 The Facilities include five buildings to accommodate offices, a blower room, a dryer building, a sludge control room, and a water purification building. Other structures include three cylindrical tanks serving as digesters, the headworks, a grit chamber, an aeration basin, sludge digesters, sludge dryers, a sand filter, ultraviolet (UV) disinfection reactors, oxidation ditches, a second set of clarifiers, a chlorine contact basin, and a recycled water reservoir, a combustion turbine generator, a steam turbine generator, cooling towers, an ammonia tank, and natural gas facilities.

The onsite Clearwater Cogeneration Facility is connected to offsite Southern California Edison (SCE) facilities via an approximately two-mile-long underground transmission line. Situated within the Railroad Street right-of-way, the 69KV line transmits power

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<sup>1</sup> The facilities process municipal wastewater into clean recycled water, dry biosolid residuals into recyclable organic material, and generate power for the supply of public demand on the local power grid. Approximately ten million gallons of wastewater are processed each day, approximately nineteen tons of dry biosolids are produced per day, and approximately 30 megawatts of power are produced.

generated from the Clearwater Cogeneration Facility to the SCE Cleargen Substation, located at 1350 Railroad Street.

## **II. Project Authority, Purpose and Scope**

### **a. AUTHORITY**

The Corps, pursuant to the specific authority granted by Congress in 10 USC § 2667 is authorized to permit non-Federal entities the right to use Federal lands in a manner that is compatible with the Federal project, laws, regulations and policies and when such use will promote the national defense or be in the public interest.

### **b. PURPOSE AND NEED**

The City of Corona has sold the Cogeneration part of the Facilities to the City of Riverside while retaining ownership of the Wastewater and Biosolids Facilities. The City of Corona has granted the City of Riverside a temporary right-of-entry to allow Riverside's operation of the plant.

To address the long-term ownership and operation of the Cogeneration plant, the City of Corona and the City of Riverside have submitted a request to the Corps to replace the City of Corona's lease with a 10 USC § 2667 lease reduced in size to by approximately 31,891 square feet, to exclude the Cogeneration Facility, and to issue a new lease to the City of Riverside for the property on which the Cogeneration Facility is located. The Cities have requested the new leases to reflect the transfer of ownership and the operation and maintenance of the Cogeneration Facility from the City of Corona to the City of Riverside.

The purpose of the proposed action is to provide for long term operation of the Cogeneration Facility consistent with the ownership of the facility.

### **c. SCOPE OF ANALYSIS**

This Environmental Assessment analyzes likely effects of the proposal by comparing a No Action alternative with the proposed action, which would allow the City of Riverside to use and access Federal land controlled by the Corps for the purpose of operating the existing Cogeneration Facility formerly, operated by the City of Corona. This analysis is offered to the interested public to solicit input on the project and will be made available for review and public input for 30 days.

Comments regarding this proposal should be addressed to the Corps at the address provided on the accompanying public notice. Following the 30-day review period, the Corps, Asset Management Division, will determine if an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be required or if a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is appropriate.

## **III. ALTERNATIVES**

**a. NO ACTION**

Under the No Action Alternative, there would be no change to the existing Corps lease with the City of Corona. The Corps would not grant a lease to the City of Riverside. The temporary right of entry under which Riverside now has access would expire concurrent with the expiration of the City of Corona's Lease.

**b. ONSITE**

Proposed action: The Corps would remove the area developed to support the Clearwater Cogeneration Facility, described more specifically in Attachment A, from the City of Corona's current lease, and the Corps would grant a lease for that area to the City of Riverside. This Proposed Action is limited to the transfer of rights and responsibilities related to the land and associated facilities located on the Property. No development or construction is being contemplated at this time.

**c. OFFSITE**

Since this involves a transfer of control over certain facilities already authorized and constructed, offsite alternatives would not satisfy the Purpose and Need. Consequently, no offsite alternatives are under consideration. Due to the highly unique nature of the existing development, no alternative locations are being considered at this time.

**IV. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

N = Not present or No Impact will occur.

Y = Impacts may occur (if yes, explain in detail under Potential Impacts).

<b>IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</b>		
<b>DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE AND BASELINE CONDITION</b>	<b>POTENTIAL DIRECT AND INDIRECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES</b>	<b>SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS</b>
<p><b>1. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:</b></p> <p>The subject property is developed with an industrial use on compacted fill. The site is not subject to faults, fault zones, landslides, or the potential for liquefaction.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: No changes in the geology of the site would be made. No expansion or alteration would be undertaken. The proposed action would only alter the lessee of the property on which the Cogeneration facility is sited.</p> <p>No action: No changes in the geology of the site would be made.</p>	<p>No impact to geology or soil resources.</p>

<p><b>2. WATER RESOURCES:</b></p> <p>No streamflow, surface, or groundwater resources exist within the leased area. The property is developed with municipal industrial uses, and no changes are proposed.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: This proposal includes no activities or changes to surface or groundwater; the Proposed Action is limited to a change in an existing out grant and issuance of a similar outgrant to another party.</p> <p>No action: No change in water resources. Water use and provision of treated water would remain the same as currently, in accordance with the Purchase and Sale Agreement.</p>	<p>No effects to water resources.</p>
<p><b>3. AIR QUALITY:</b></p> <p>The existing plant operates in compliance with Air Quality Permit # 002537, issued by the South Coast Air Quality Management District.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: The project has no potential to cause direct or indirect impacts to local air quality because it is limited to a change in ownership of an existing out grant. The proposed change in ownership does not change the emissions and greenhouse gases established under the existing permit, and does not require new or modified equipment; therefore, no increase in current emissions, conflicts with the SIP, or triggers for a new conformity analysis result. The power generation, power use, and biosolids drying would remain unchanged. The Cities have coordinated with the SCAQMD on the transfer of the Air Quality Permit, and the plant will continue to operate in accordance with the permit.</p> <p>No action: No change in air quality would be anticipated from maintaining the current status.</p>	<p>No effects to air quality.</p>
<p><b>4. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:</b></p> <p>No rare plants or cover exist at the out grant location, which is developed with Municipal industrial uses.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: The project, a change in ownership of an existing out grant, has no potential to cause direct or indirect impacts to vegetated areas.</p> <p>No Action: no impacts would be anticipated.</p>	<p>No effects to vegetation.</p>
<p><b>5. WILDLIFE:</b></p> <p>The subject leased lands are fully developed with Municipal facilities and do not include native habitat areas for wildlife.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: A change in outgrant holder has no impact on wildlife, birds, or fish.</p> <p>No Action: The no action alternative would not impact wildlife.</p>	<p>No effects to vegetation and other natural resources.</p>

<p><b>6. THREATENED OR ENDANGERED SPECIES: N/A</b></p> <p>The Prado Basin generally is used by both Federal/State-listed species. Within the Basin's vast acreage, however, the subject lease lands exist, which are fully developed with Municipal facilities and do not include native habitat areas for wildlife.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: The project has no impact on threatened or endangered species.</p> <p>No Action: No impact on T/E species.</p>	<p>No effects to listed species or their habitat.</p>
<p><b>7. WETLANDS: N/A</b></p> <p>Refer to #6, above. No delineated wetlands are included in the outgrant area, which is limited to areas developed with Municipal utilities.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>8. CULTURAL RESOURCES: N/A</b></p> <p>No cultural resources are located in the specific leased areas based on Phase I Cultural Resource Study RI-3093.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: The proposal does not have "the potential to cause effects."</p> <p>No Action: no potential to cause effects.</p>	<p>No effects to cultural resources.</p>
<p><b>9. AESTHETICS:</b></p> <p>The subject Corps owned land is fully developed with public utility facilities, and is adjacent to land developed with industrial uses to the southwest and southeast, and disturbed vacant lands of the Prado Basin to the northwest and northeast.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: The change in ownership of an existing out grant would not affect aesthetics.</p> <p>No Action: No impact to aesthetics.</p>	<p>No effect to aesthetics.</p>
<p><b>10. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:</b></p> <p>There are no limited resources on the leased area. Transfer of land control would not affect other, outlying, natural resource areas. During the City of Corona's ownership, Clearwater generation was separately metered from the waste water treatment plant's actual electric consumption. The Clearwater waste water treatment plant consumed power (metered via a second meter), drawn from the electric grid. The Clearwater power plant and the waste treatment plant share transmission lines to send and receive power from the electric grid. However, the change in ownership does not result in additional generation being sent to the electric grid from Clearwater</p>	<p>Proposed Action: The Proposed Action would transfer lands from the City of Corona to the City of Riverside and will not affect such scarce resources as land, water, air, or energy resources. The City of Riverside would continue to make available treated water and heat from the Plant for the City of Corona's use in operation of the wastewater treatment plant. The energy, water, and heat use at the three facilities is anticipated to remain the same. There is no additional generation being sent to the electric grid from Clearwater generating plant or additional consumption by the waste water treatment plant due to the land transfer.</p> <p>The transfer in ownership of the cogeneration facility preserved the use of heat from the cogeneration</p>	<p>No effect to these resources.</p>

<p>generating plant or additional consumption by the waste water treatment plant due to the ownership change.</p>	<p>facility to dry the biosolids, as described in the purchase and sale agreement.</p> <p>No action: Under the no-action alternative, the lease by the City of Corona would remain as is. The demands on environmental resources would remain the same, and the City of Riverside would continue to operate the Cogeneration plant with a right of entry from the City of Corona. When the right-of-entry expires, it is likely that the City of Riverside would petition for a renewal of the terms for a 5-10 year period.</p>	
<p>11. WATERS/NAVIGABLE WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES:</p> <p><b>N/A.</b> No jurisdictional 404 areas on-site.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>12. NOISE:</p> <p>Operational noise is approximately 38 dBA. The setting is industrial, with no local residents.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: The project will not increase the ambient noise level.</p> <p>No Action: The noise level would remain the same.</p>	<p>No effect to noise.</p>
<p>13. IMPACTS TO EXISTING FEDERAL FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT PROJECT:</p> <p>Although the subject site is within the Prado FCB, the leased area is protected by levee.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: The project has no potential to cause effects on flood risk management efforts or facilities.</p> <p>No Action: The facilities are protected against the standard project flood by a buffer that was constructed by the Corps. Continued existence of the facilities in their current location would not impact the flood risk management project.</p>	<p>No effects to the flood risk management project, Prado Dam Flood Control Project.</p>
<p>14. IMPACTS ON OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION</b></p>		
<p>DESCRIPTION OF RESOURCE AND BASELINE CONDITION</p>	<p>POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES</p>	<p>SIGNIFICANCE OF IMPACTS</p>
<p>15. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:</p> <p>The existing plant operates according</p>	<p>Proposed Action: The transfer in ownership of the existing out lease area has no impact on operations</p>	<p>No effects to Health and Safety.</p>

<p>to all licenses, permits, and approvals.</p>	<p>according to State and other Safety regulations.</p>	
<p>16. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:</p> <p>N/A. No change to existing industry or agriculture.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: There is no effect to such activities or production.</p>	<p>No effect to these parameters.</p>
<p>17. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:</p> <p>When operated by the City of Corona, the Facility contracted out the labor without hiring permanent, benefitted employees.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: No jobs will be eliminated and nine new jobs will be created. The City of Riverside gives first preference to Veterans and second preference to local residents, including the unemployed, during hiring. These jobs are permanent and include benefits. No mitigation is required.</p> <p>No action: The City of Corona would continue to be responsible for the leased area in accordance with the terms of the existing lease. The employment numbers would be substantially the same as the Proposed Action. There would be no impact to employment.</p>	<p>No effects would result.</p>
<p>18. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:</p> <p>The subject out lease area, developed with fenced and secured Municipal utility operations, is off-limits to Recreation. The lease area is bounded by industrial/light industrial and commercial facilities. An open space nearby was once utilized for soccer fields, but is no longer being used for this purpose. In general, all Recreation activities occur at nearby basin lands. While there are wilderness areas exist within Prado Basin, they are not within the immediate vicinity of the leased area.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: Although some naturally vegetated areas generally exist within the Prado Basin, no wilderness areas are nearby. Nearby recreational areas would not be affected by the activity.</p> <p>No Action: The area would continue to be within the City of Corona's leased area. It would be utilized for facility related purposes. There would be no additional wilderness or recreation areas created as a result of the City of Corona's use of the leased area.</p>	<p>No effects to recreation/wilderness activities.</p>
<p>19. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING: Will the project add to the population and require additional housing?</p> <p>N/A</p>	<p>Proposed Action: No effect to housing or population.</p> <p>No Action: no impact identified.</p>	<p>No effects to population etc.</p>

<p>20. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:</p> <p>The site is served by fully improved local streets in an industrial park setting. Since no residential uses are in the project vicinity, no social environmental justice issues exist.</p>	<p>Proposed Action: The existing facility will require no changes to infrastructure and is suitable for the site.</p> <p>No Action: No impacts identified.</p>	<p>No effect to local traffic patterns.</p>
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**V. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

This proposal involves a transfer of control over certain facilities already authorized.

- a. **PAST** - The Prado Flood Control Basin and its surrounding areas have been the location of a number of past and present civil works projects or outgrants including a variety of developments within the Basin as well as some external/ adjacent to the Basin. Internal past developments include the Dam itself, the now-abandoned town of Rincon with some remaining roads, and the past construction of numerous recreation and other projects by the City of Corona and/or United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). These include Stagecoach and Butterfields Parks, the Corona Municipal Airport, and a portion (Vesey Trail) of the Santa Ana Recreation Trail (SART). The water treatment plant, built in 1968, provides wastewater treatment for the City of Corona. In 2005 The City of Corona also constructed the Biosolids and Cogeneration Facilities. The Prado Basin is also bordered by major built thoroughfares such as the 91 and 71 Freeways.
- b. **PRESENT** – The Prado Dam itself has been in place since dam construction in 1940’s and in the interim, the above improvements have been made. Recent developments at the Prado Basin include several large saddle dikes designed to accompany the recent Prado Dam-raising construction project, as well as studies to better define sediment management and the developing of Santa Ana River Trail project needs. Other than federal lands administered by the Corps in the Prado Basin, the adjacent Corona area is largely built to completion in residences (east) and industry (southeast). A communications tower by Riverside County has been approved and will be placed on Federal land just outside the Prado Basin, westward from the dam and west of the SR71 freeway. Some mitigation acreage is under development in the interests of reducing potential environmental impacts due to the dam-raising or to other construction or maintenance projects. Most of these lands are located within the Prado Basin
- c. **FUTURE** - In the future, Corona is likely to develop additional parkland on Corps-leased lands or on its own lands. Future sports areas, now under discussion, may be developed by the City of Corona in the lower, western Prado Basin although these have not yet been designed. Additional segments of the proposed Santa Ana River Trail, to the Dam’s south and north, are being designed at this time for future construction. Valuable riparian and native habitats used by the Least Bell’s Vireo are located close to the Prado Dam and throughout the Prado Basin. These areas are not likely to be developed in the future given the special status and use of these areas.

## **VI. SUMMARY OF MITIGATION MEASURES OF THE PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES:**

This action is a real estate transfer of an existing operation. No mitigation measures have been identified as needed for this action.

## **VII. AGENCY COORDINATION**

A 30-day public notice for this proposed action will be issued during November, 2011.

## **VIII. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS**

To be determined after the 30-day Public Notice period.

## **IX. APPLICABLE ENVIRONMENTAL LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

For each of the following, please provide a brief description of any consultation efforts made, and the results of those consultation efforts. Any supporting documents are included in Appendices.

**a. Endangered Species Act (ESA):** The proposed action is in compliance with the ESA because implementation of the proposal as stated would avoid direct and indirect impacts to endangered species. No consultation with the Fish and Wildlife Service was needed.

**b. Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA):** The proposed action is in compliance with the MBTA because implementation of the proposal as stated would avoid direct and indirect impacts to migratory species. Coordination with resource agencies was not needed.

**c. Section 404 of the CWA.** CWA is not applicable in this situation because no waters of the U.S. or wetlands are affected.

**d Section 401 of the CWA.** Section 401 of the CWA is not applicable because no waters of the U.S. or wetlands are affected.

**e. Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA).** CZMA is not applicable in that the project area is outside of the coastal zone.

**f. Section 176(C) of the Clean Air Act (CAA) General Conformity Rule Review.** The proposed action is in compliance with the CAA. The facilities at issue have a current Air Quality Permit. No change in air quality will result from this real estate action. The City has coordinated with the SCAQMD.

**g. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).** The proposed action is in compliance with the NHPA. The proposed real estate transfer activity would take place on a structure which is not an historic structure and would have no potential to cause effects to cultural resources, and therefore no coordination with a State Historic Preservation Officer is necessary.

**h. E.O. 13175: Consultation with Indian Tribes, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians.** This action would not affect sacred Native American cultural resources. Due to the limited scope, the project was not specifically noticed to any Tribes or other Natives.

