

# MARIN EMERGENCY RADIO AUTHORITY

c/o Town of Corte Madera  
300 Tamalpais Drive, Corte Madera, CA 94925

## NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY FINAL SUBSEQUENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT MERA NEXT GENERATION RADIO COMMUNICATION SYSTEM

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that a Final Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (FSEIR) has been completed for the MERA Next Generation Radio Communications System project, and is on file at the County of Marin Department of Public Works, 3501 Civic Center Drive, Room 304, San Rafael, California, and available for public review between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. The Final SEIR can also be accessed from a link on the Marin County website, <https://www.marincounty.org/depts/pw/divisions/projects/mera>.

All relevant documents incorporated into the Final SEIR including the Draft SEIR and Appendices are available for public review at the Marin County Department of Public Works office.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The MERA radio system is vital for emergency countywide communications between police, firefighters and public works crews. The emergency communications system is a network of radio antennas and equipment linked with microwave connections. However, the combination of older equipment and recent changes to frequency requirements by the *Congressional Jobs Bill HR 3630* now requires an upgrade of all Ultra High Frequency (T-band) radio communications systems, including the MERA system. The Next Gen System would update the current backbone network to utilize new radio frequencies in the 700MHz band to vacate the UHF (T-band) frequencies currently utilized. The Next Gen System would also utilize Project 25 (P25) technology to provide improved public service and emergency radio coverage within the County of Marin. Funding for the project is generated by a parcel tax that was authorized by Marin County voters in 2014.

The current MERA system includes 15 active communications sites. The Next Gen System would retain and upgrade 10 of the functioning sites, decommission five existing sites and add equipment to eight new sites, which include previously developed infrastructure not part of the MERA system. Existing infrastructure at the eight new sites include communication facilities or water storage tanks, and a water wellhead site in northern Marin County.

Existing sites used in Next Gen System:

- Civic Center
- Big Rock Ridge
- Mt. Tamalpais
- Mt. Barnabe
- Point Reyes Hill
- Dollar Hill
- San Pedro Ridge
- Mt. Tiburon
- Sonoma Mountain
- Stewart Point

New sites proposed for Next Gen System:

- Prime Site (Sheriff's dispatch center)
- Tomales (existing cell phone site)
- Coyote Peak (a water wellhead site)
- Skyview Terrace (an MMWD water tank site)
- Muir Beach (a local water tank site)
- Wolfback Ridge (an existing broadcast tower)
- OTA Mt. Burdell (an existing broadcast tower)
- Mill Valley Water Tank (an MMWD water tank site)

The five sites to be decommissioned as part of the Next Gen System are: Forbes Hill in San Rafael, Mt. Burdell near Novato, Mill Valley City Hall and Mill Valley Police Station, and the Bay Hill Road site in Sonoma County.

**PROJECT LOCATIONS:** Figure 1 shows the Next Gen System configuration and Table 1 provides a summary description of the communication sites including assessor parcel numbers and coordinates. A more detailed project description with a list of existing and proposed facilities at each site can be found on the MERA website:

<https://www.marincounty.org/depts/pw/divisions/projects/mera>

**SUMMARY OF IMPACT CONCLUSIONS:** The Final SEIR evaluates the project with respect to the following topical issues:

1) Land Use & Planning	7) Biological Resources	13) Aesthetics/Visual Resources
2) Population & Housing	8) Energy & Natural Resources	14) Cultural Resources
3) Geology and Soils	9) Hazards and Hazardous Materials Radio Frequency Analysis	15) Tribal Cultural Resources
4) Hydrology and Water Quality	10) Noise	16) Agriculture and Forestry Resources
5) Air Quality	11) Public Services and Recreation	17) Greenhouse Gas Emissions
6) Transportation/Traffic	12) Utilities & Service Systems	18) Mineral Resources

The Final SEIR finds that the projects would result in significant or potentially significant environmental impacts related to topical issues # 7, 9, 13, 14, 15 and recommends the implementation of feasible mitigation measures to either avoid or reduce to a level of insignificance the identified environmental impacts. The Final SEIR finds that the proposed project would result in significant unavoidable aesthetic/visual resource impacts.

**REVIEW PERIOD:** This Notice of Availability of the Final SEIR commences a 14-day public review period.

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that a public meeting to consider certification of the Final SEIR will be conducted by the MERA Governing Board on:

**Wednesday, December 11, 2019 at 3:30 p.m.**  
 Novato Fire Protection District Administrative Office  
 45 Rowland Way, Novato, CA 94945

Please call the Marin County Department of Public Works at (415) 473-6530 on or after December 4, 2019 in order to obtain a copy of the agenda, or visit our website at <https://www.marincounty.org/depts/pw/divisions/projects/mera>.

If this project is challenged in court, the challenge may be limited to raising only those issues raised orally at the prior public hearing on the Draft SEIR on this matter, or in written correspondence submitted during the 45-day Draft SEIR public review period or before or at the public meeting described in this notice. (Government Code Section 65009[b][2]).

Ernest Klock, Operations Officer, MERA  
**Phone: 415-473-4368**

**Table 1. MERA Sites and Locations for CEQA Evaluation**

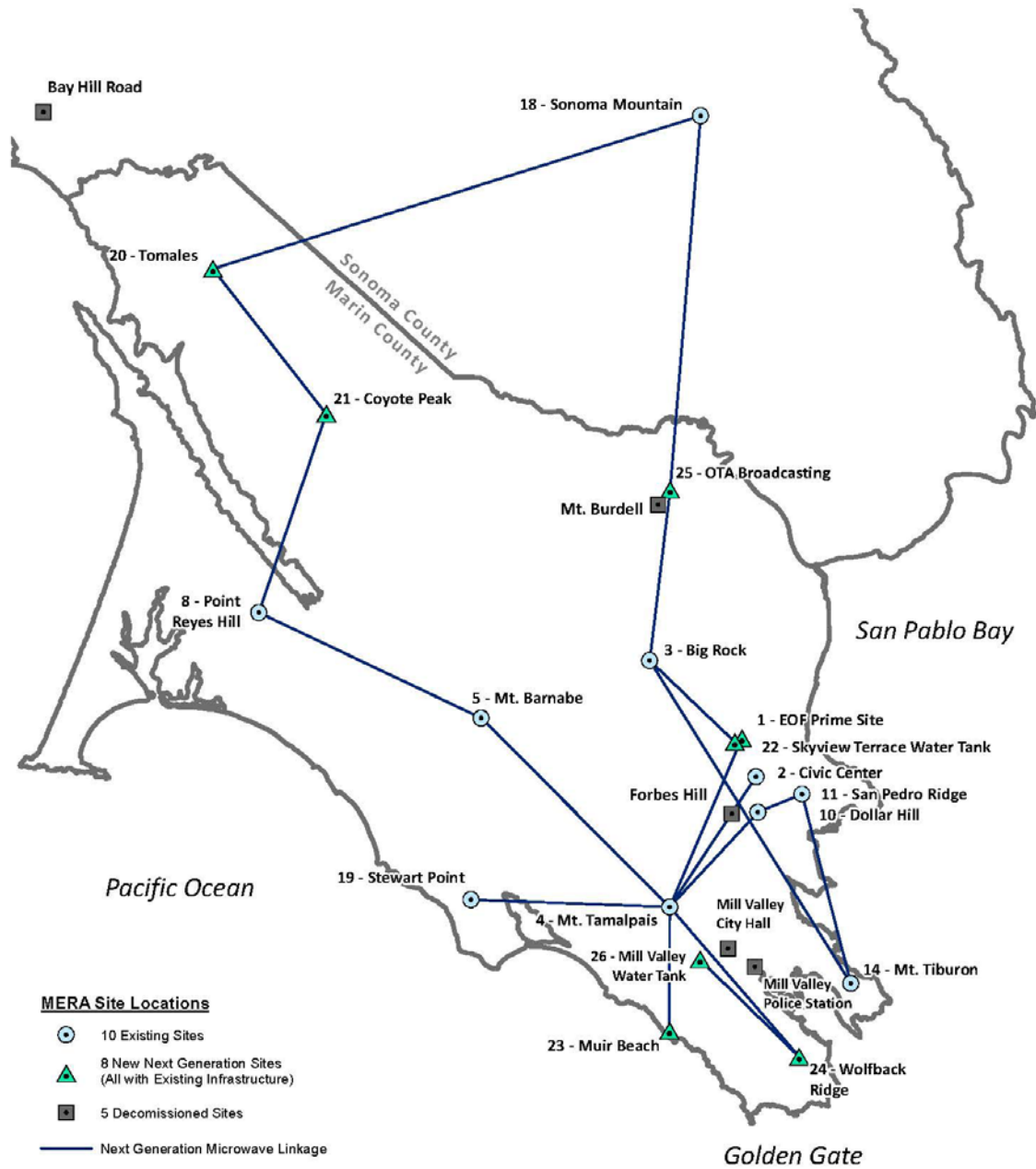
Site Name and Number	APN	Jurisdiction	Coordinates	Previous EIR	Comments
1. Prime Site EOF <sup>^</sup>	165-220-11	City of San Rafael	38.019167, -122.541528	N	New site at Sheriff's Dispatch
2. Civic Center	179-270-11	City of San Rafael	37.999056, -122.531306	Y	Upgrades
3. Big Rock	164-300-04	Marin County	38.059194, -122.604250	Y	Upgrades
4. Mt. Tamalpais	197-120-31	Marin County	37.929006, -122.587084	Y	Upgrades
5. Mt. Barnabe	168-240-01	Marin County	38.026751, -122.716321	Y	Upgrades
6. Bolinas Fire Station	193-030-20	Marin County	N/A	Y	Dropped from original system
7. Bolinas Ridge	197-120-30	Marin County	N/A	Y	Dropped from original system
8. Point Reyes Hill	109-160-23	Marin County	38.079836, -122.866944	Y	Upgrades
9. Forbes Hill	010-261-02	City of San Rafael	N/A	Y	Decommission
10. Dollar Hill	011-051-02	City of San Rafael	37.980262, -122.529354	Y	Upgrades
11. San Pedro Ridge	015-250-21	City of San Rafael	37.990205, -122.500139	Y	Upgrades
12. Mt. Burdell	125-180-17	City of Novato	N/A	Y	Decommission
13. Novato PD	153-061-28	City of Novato	N/A	Y	Dropped from original system
14. Mt. Tiburon	058-261-39	Town of Tiburon	37.890440, -122.464796	Y	Upgrades
15. Mill Valley City Hall	028-014-16	City of Mill Valley	N/A	Y	Decommission
16. Mill Valley Police Station*	030-250-01	City of Mill Valley	N/A	Y	Decommission
17. Bay Hill Road	100-190-07	Sonoma County	N/A	Y	Decommission
18. Sonoma Mountain	136-190-09	Sonoma County	38.261015, -122.903629	Y	Upgrades
19. Stewart Point**	188-090-15	Marin County	38.185833, -122.825167	Y	Upgrades
20. Tomales***	100-050-42	Marin County	38.017000, -122.546000	N	New site with cell tower and equipment
21. Coyote Peak	106-110-03	Marin County	37.863289, -122.585512	N	New site with existing water wellheads
22. Skyview Terrace Water Tank	165-220-02	City of San Rafael	37.851085, -122.498376	N	New site with MMWD water tank
23. Muir Beach	199-262-11	Marin County	38.149888, -122.593239	N	New site with local water tank
24. Wolfback Ridge	200-120-02	Marin County	37.902735, -122.558010	N	New site with existing 100' tower
25. Mt. Burdell OTA <sup>^</sup>	125-160-01	Marin County	38.261015, -122.903629	N	New site with existing structure and tower
26. Mill Valley Water Tank	046-070-03	Marin County	38.185833, -122.825167	N	New site with existing MMWD water tank

\* Added to original EIR as an adjustment before its publication so signal from Mill Valley City Hall would be detected.

\*\* Added to original EIR with a CEQA Amendment in 2006.

\*\*\*Added to original EIR with a Categorical Exemption in 2012. Incorporated into SEIR to discuss whole action.

<sup>^</sup> EOF = Emergency Operations Facility, OTA = Over-the-Air Broadcasting



Sources: National Geographic Basemap, WRA | Prepared By: czumwalt, 5/3/2018

**Figure 1 MERA Next Generation System Configuration**

MERA Next Generation Communications System

