

Summary Form for Electronic Document Submittal

Form F

Lead agencies may include 15 hardcopies of this document when submitting electronic copies of Environmental Impact Reports, Negative Declarations, Mitigated Negative Declarations, or Notices of Preparation to the State Clearinghouse (SCH). The SCH also accepts other summaries, such as EIR Executive Summaries prepared pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15123. Please include one copy of the Notice of Completion Form (NOC) with your submission and attach the summary to each electronic copy of the document.

SCH #: 2017071022

Project Title: City of San Diego Municipal Waterways Maintenance Plan

Lead Agency: City of San Diego

Contact Name: Myra Herrmann, Senior Planner

Email: mherrmann@sandiego.gov

Phone Number: (619) 446-5372

Project Location: San Diego, San Diego

City

County

Project Description (Proposed actions, location, and/or consequences).

Coastal Development Permit (CDP) and Site Development Permit (SDP), and an Ordinance for implementation of the Municipal Waterways Maintenance Plan to allow for a subsequent approval process not required in the San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC). The Municipal Waterways Maintenance Plan (MWMP) provides the regulatory guidance and parameters for the City of San Diego's (City) Transportation & Storm Water Department (TSW) to maintain and repair existing storm water facilities necessary to reduce and manage flood risk. The MWMP provides both a project-level and program-level analysis for the specific maintenance and repair activities in areas where potential local, state, and federally regulated impacts may be necessary. Project-Level Analysis (Facility Maintenance Plans): The MWMP identifies specific channels, ditches, storm drain structures (outlets/inlets), and basins that may require maintenance in the near future. This list of facilities is included in the MWMP for site-specific evaluation and project-level maintenance. For the project-level evaluation, the MWMP includes 66 FMPs (covering 113 segments and approximately 18 linear miles). Program-Level Analysis (Other Activities): The MWMP also includes a program-level analysis and process to handle and address other storm water assets or facilities that are not analyzed at the project-level, as well as certain plan-wide maintenance activities that may also be implemented under the MWMP. The MWMP establishes a process and mitigation framework to address these potential additional related plan-wide programmatic activities for ~50 miles of channels, ditches and basins; drainage conveyance facilities, structures, drainage BMP facilities, and CIP facilities.

Identify the project's significant or potentially significant effects and briefly describe any proposed mitigation measures that would reduce or avoid that effect.

The proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable/cumulatively significant and unavoidable impacts in the areas of Biological Resources, Solid Waste, and Water Quality, and less than significant environmental impacts with implementation of Environmental Protocols (EPs) or impacts mitigated to less than significant in the areas of Aesthetics/ Visual Effects and Neighborhood Character, Air Quality and Odor, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Health and Safety Hazards, Historical, Archaeological, and Tribal Cultural Resources, Hydrology, Land Use, Noise, and Paleontological Resources.

Impacts would avoided or mitigated through implementation of Environmental Protocols and/or Mitigation Measures in accordance with the City's Significance Thresholds and associated resource guidelines. Biology impacts will be mitigated at the applicable ratios pursuant to the City's MSCP Subarea Plan and Biology Guidelines. based on the type of maintenance activities being performed. Archaeological and Tribal Cultural Resources will implement measures to avoid, reduce and minimize impacts based on the type of maintenance activities being performed.

Implementation of Environmental Protocols will ensure that impacts are avoided and/or minimized through regulatory compliance or by using Best Management Practices outlined in the WMP document.

If applicable, describe any of the project's areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public.

The main objective of the project is to reduce the risk of flooding in the City's urbanized areas. The means and methods to accomplish this objective is the removal of native, non-native, and invasive vegetation, as well as sediment built up in the storm channels. This would improve flow during storm events and prevent facility failure. Although vetted with the public through stakeholder outreach and meetings with local wildlife agencies, there is potential controversy associated with the methodology being proposed because of the potential and/or known impact to wetland and upland habitat and species. Without removal of these materials, the flood risk is increased with each storm event, preventing the City from protecting life and property as required in our City Charter. Also of note is the potential concerns raised regarding meeting water quality standards by reducing pollutants in our waterways pursuant to our MS4 permit requirements.

Provide a list of the responsible or trustee agencies for the project.

Caltrans District 11
Department of Fish and Wildlife
CAL EPA
Department of Toxic Substance Control
Department of Parks and Recreation
Natural Resources Agency
State Water Resources Control Board
Regional Water Quality Control Board
Department of Water Resources
Coastal Commission
Transportation Commission
Native American Heritage Commission

PROJECT BACKGROUND: Under City Charter Section 26.1 and Council Policy 800-04, the City of San Diego (City) Transportation & Storm Water Department (TSW) is responsible for maintaining adequate drainage facilities to remove storm water runoff in an efficient, economic, and environmentally and aesthetically acceptable manner for the protection of property and life. The City generally accepts responsibility for maintenance of public drainage facilities that are designed and constructed to City standards and located within a public street or drainage easement dedicated to the City. Maintenance and repairs are an important component of operating the storm water conveyance system and providing reliable flood risk reduction throughout the City. This includes removing accumulated sediment, trash, debris and vegetation that compromise the system. Often, maintenance occurs in areas where authorization or permits from various regulatory agencies are required to protect environmental resources. TSW previously conducted maintenance of drainage facilities pursuant to the former Master Storm Water System Maintenance Program (MMP).

In 2011, the City developed the MMP to govern channel operation and maintenance activities. The MMP identified a specific planning, impact assessment and mitigation process for channel maintenance activities. The certified Final Recirculated Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) for the MMP included 113 channel facility segments, covering a linear distance of 32 miles. However, to authorize maintenance under the MMP, an extensive site-specific review by the regulatory agencies and the public was required prior to each maintenance activity and took up to 24 months to complete. A lawsuit was filed challenging the MMP (*San Diegans for Open Government et al. v. City of San Diego*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2011-00101571), and the City entered into a settlement agreement, which required, among other things, the City to consider the PEIR for the MMP “null and void” as of September 2018.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL of a Coastal Development Permit (CDP) and Site Development Permit (SDP), and an Ordinance for implementation of the Municipal Waterways Maintenance Plan to allow for a subsequent approval process not required in the San Diego Municipal Code (SDMC).

The Municipal Waterways Maintenance Plan (MWMP) provides the regulatory guidance and parameters for the City of San Diego’s (City) Transportation & Storm Water Department (TSW) to maintain and repair existing storm water facilities necessary to reduce and manage flood risk. The MWMP provides both a project-level and program-level analysis for the specific maintenance and repair activities in areas where potential local, state, and federally regulated impacts may be necessary and includes:

- A list of Facility Maintenance Plans (FMPs) that provide project-specific details and requirements for the majority of facilities that are likely to require routine maintenance and repair.
- A range of plan-wide activities that may occur throughout the storm water system where flood risks may arise and that will be conducted in accordance with a regulatory framework identified under the MWMP and associated permits.

Together, these two components provide operational flexibility while also providing specific, detailed analysis for the majority of anticipated maintenance and repair activities.

Project-Level Analysis (Facility Maintenance Plans): The MWMP identifies specific channels, ditches, storm drain structures (outlets/inlets), and basins that may require maintenance in the near future. This list of facilities is included in the MWMP for site-specific evaluation and project-level maintenance. For the project-level evaluation, the MWMP includes 66 FMPs (covering 113 segments and approximately 18 linear miles) that include the following:

- 50 channel/ditch groups – 96 segments
- 6 basins groups – 7 segments
- 10 structure groups covering 10 structures

Program-Level Analysis (Other Activities): The MWMP also includes a program-level analysis and process to handle and address other storm water assets or facilities that are not analyzed at the project-level, as well as certain plan-wide maintenance activities that may also be implemented under the MWMP. The MWMP establishes a process and mitigation framework to address these potential additional related plan-wide programmatic activities, including:

- Minor maintenance activities
- Changed conditions for new or substantially amended FMPs
- Compensatory mitigation sites
- Emergency maintenance or repair

For the plan-wide programmatic evaluation, the following facilities comprise the City's storm water system:

- Approximately 50 miles of channels, ditches, and basins
- 48,561 drainage conveyance facilities (including storm drain pipes and channels)
- 55,334 structures (including inlets, outlets, cleanouts, and connectors)
- 3,724 drainage best management practice (BMP) facilities
- 85 Capital Improvement Program facilities (outlets, BMPs, and stream restoration)