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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 #: 2020120527

Project Title: City of Willits Groundwater Resiliency Improvements Project

Lead Agency: City of Willits

Contact Name: Andrea Trincado, Project Manager

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Project Location: Willits, Mendocino County

City *County*

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

The City of Willits (City) proposes improvements to the Willits Groundwater System in order to increase the City's conjunctive use capabilities and provide the City with a reliable water supply sufficient to meet community needs in the event surface water becomes untenable. The proposed project is located northeast of the City center on City-owned parcels identified by APNs 007-010-01, 108-030-06, and 108-020-05 (Site), which are currently utilized for the Willits Groundwater System, including the Elias Replacement well, Long 20 well, and groundwater treatment plant, and located adjacent to the City's sewer plant. Improvements would be completed in three (3) phases and would include the installation of 3,750 feet of new water line and the abandonment of 3,600 feet of existing water line within the Willits Groundwater System, the installation of a pump and supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) facility to manage the Long 20 well, establishment of power to the Long 20 well pump and SCADA facility, arsenic pilot testing on the Long 20 well, and the installation of a 250,000-gallon clear well (chlorine contact tank) adjacent to the west of the groundwater treatment plant.

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

Potential environmental impacts from construction and operation of the proposed project were analyzed and the following potential impacts were identified as requiring mitigation to reduce the potential impact to a less than significant level:
Biological Resources - potential impacts to biological resources, including Baker's meadowfoam, migratory birds, roosting bats, and wetlands would be mitigated through implementation of the construction practices recommended in the Habitat Assessment dated December 3, 2020 (Mitigation Measures BIO-1 through BIO-7).
Cultural/Tribal Cultural Resources - the potential for the discovery of an archaeological resource, human remains, or tribal cultural resource during project construction would be mitigated through implementation of standard protocol that requires that work be halted and specific notification procedures followed, in the event a resource is discovered and that a cultural monitor be on-site during excavation activities related to the water line installation (Mitigation Measures CUL-1 and CUL-2).
Geology/Soils - potential geological risks associated with construction of the clear well would be mitigated through compliance with recommendations provided in the Soils Report prepared by LACO Associates on June 30, 2020 (Mitigation Measure GEO-1).
Hydrology - potential impacts to groundwater quality during foundation excavation and concrete placement activities would be mitigated through compliance with the recommendation provided in the Soils Report (LACO, 2020) (Mitigation Measure HYDRO-1).

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

Hydrology and Water Quality: On December 28, 2020, the City released the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the proposed project for public review. Nine public comments and three agency comments were received in response. Several of the comments expressed the common theme that the IS/MND should include more discussion of the project's potential impacts to groundwater resources. In response, the City revised the IS/MND to include additional detail on the proposed improvements, the City's water use, the City's existing wells and monitoring practices, and the conditions of the Little Lake Valley groundwater basin.
Biological Resources: The project proposes the installation of a water line in an agricultural field with known populations of Baker's meadowfoam and an area of native trees that may provide habitat to migratory birds, including passerines and raptors, and roosting bats. To ensure potential impacts to Baker's meadowfoam are avoided, the Habitat Assessment provides several recommendations, including designating Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) and installing temporary fencing around areas of known Baker's meadowfoam during construction to prevent disturbance from construction equipment and to prevent the placement of side cast soil material on the Baker's meadowfoam during excavation of the access holes. These measures would be implemented as Mitigation Measures BIO-1 and BIO-2. To reduce the potential for the take of nesting passerines and raptors, and roosting bats, construction would occur September 1 through October 15, as recommended by the Habitat Assessment, to ensure that noise and ground disturbance associated with construction occur outside the nesting season for passerines and raptors and the maternity roosting season for bats.

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

California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Region 1
Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 1