



Public Notice

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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Subject: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting

Action ID: SPK-2004-00116

Comments Period: September 1, 2011 – October 26, 2011

SUBJECT: Notice of Intent (NOI) to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting for the Cordova Hills Project. This notice is to inform interested parties of the opening of scoping and to solicit comments on the proposed project. This notice may also be viewed at the Corps web site at <http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/regulatory.html>. On September 1, 2011, a NOI was published in the Federal Register (Vol. 76, No. 170, 54452), which can be found at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-09-01/pdf/2011-22392.pdf>.

APPLICANT: Cordova Hills Ownership Group
Attn: Mr. Ron Alvarado
5241 Arnold Avenue
McClellan, California 95652

AGENT: ECORP Consulting, Inc.
Attn: Mr. Jim Stewart
2525 Warren Drive
Rocklin, California 95677

LOCATION: The 2,688-acre site is located in unincorporated eastern Sacramento County, and is bordered on the west by Grant Line Road and on the north by Glory Lane. The proposed project site is north of Kiefer Road and west of the Carson Creek drainage, in portions of Sections 13, 14, 23 and 24, Township 8 North, Range 7 East, and Section 18, Township 8 North, Range 8 East, Mount Diablo Meridian.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The applicant proposes to implement a large-scale, mixed-use, mixed-density master planned community with an integrated university, neighborhood and regional commercial and residential uses and associated infrastructure. The applicant proposes approximately: 1,000 acres of residential uses ranging from one dwelling unit per acre to 40 dwelling units per acre; 1,380,000 square feet of retail and commercial uses; 240 acres of private university campus; 635 acres of recreation areas, parks, natural avoided areas and open space corridors; 538 acres of preserve for on-site wetland and habitat avoidance; and 18 miles of off-street/multi-use trails.

The project site is approximately 2,688 acres and contains 89.106 acres of waters of the United States. The proposed project would involve the discharge of fill material into approximately 39.630 acres of waters of the United States, including vernal pools, seasonal wetlands, seeps, intermittent drainages, and stock ponds. The proposed project may also have indirect impacts on other waters of the U.S.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Background Information: In 2008, the Cordova Hills Ownership Group (applicant) submitted a Department of the Army permit application for the proposed Cordova Hills project. On June 18, 2008, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District (Corps) determined that the proposed project may result in significant impacts to the environment, and that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is necessary. A revised permit application was submitted by the applicant on March 15, 2011. Sacramento County, as the lead agency responsible for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act, is currently preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). The DEIR is expected to be released in the fall of 2011.

Scoping Meeting: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Sacramento District (Corps), will conduct a public scoping meeting on Tuesday, September 13, 2011 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The scoping meeting will be held at Rancho Cordova City Hall, located at 2729 Prospect Park Drive, Rancho Cordova, California 95670.

Environmental Setting. A wetland delineation of the project site, which has been verified by the Corps, indicates that a total of approximately 89 acres of waters of the United States are present within the proposed project area, including: 47.5 acres of vernal pools; 22.9 acres of seasonal wetlands; 0.01 acres of seeps; 16.9 acres of intermittent drainage; 0.17 acres of Carson Creek; and 1.5 acres of man-made stock ponds.

Alternatives. The EIS will include alternatives to the Proposed Action that will meet NEPA requirements for a reasonable range of alternatives, and will also meet the requirements of *CWA Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines*. The alternatives to be evaluated within the EIS have not yet been developed, but will, at a minimum, include the No Action Alternative, the Proposed Project Alternative, additional on-site alternatives, and off-site alternatives.

OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORIZATIONS: Water quality certification or a waiver, as required under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act from the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board is required for this project. The applicant has not indicated they have applied for certification.

HISTORIC PROPERTIES: The Corps will initiate consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as appropriate.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: The majority of the proposed project site is located within the Mather Core Recovery Area, an area identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as being important for the continued existence of the federally listed vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*), vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardii*), Sacramento Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia viscida*) and slender Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia tenuis*). The proposed project may affect these Federally-listed endangered or threatened species. The Corps will initiate consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, as appropriate.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT: The proposed project will not adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) as defined in the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

The above determinations are based on information provided by the applicant and our preliminary review.

EVALUATION FACTORS: The Corps' public involvement program includes several opportunities to provide verbal and written comments on the proposed Cordova Hills Project through the EIS process. Affected federal, state, and local agencies, Native American tribes, and other interested private organizations and parties are invited to participate. Potentially significant issues to be analyzed in depth in the EIS include loss of waters of the United States (including wetlands), and impacts related to cultural resources, biological resources, air quality, hydrology and water quality, noise, traffic, aesthetics, utilities and service systems, and socioeconomic effects. The activity's impact on the public interest will include application of the Section 404(b)(1) guidelines promulgated by the

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Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency (40 CFR Part 230). Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

SUBMITTING COMMENTS: Interested parties are invited to submit written comments on the permit application on or before **October 26, 2011**. Scoping comments should be submitted within the next 60 days, but may be submitted at any time prior to publication of the Draft EIS.

Lisa Gibson, Project Manager
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The Corps is particularly interested in receiving comments related to alternatives to the proposed project, the proposal's probable impacts on the affected aquatic environment, and the secondary and cumulative effects. Please note that all comment letters received are subject to release to the public through the Freedom of Information Act and will be addressed within the Draft EIS. If you have questions or need additional information please contact the applicant or the Corps' project manager Lisa Gibson, 916-557-5250, Lisa.M.Gibson2@usace.army.mil.