



US Army Corps  
of Engineers

Sacramento District  
1325 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814-2922

# Public Notice

Public Notice Number: 200100495

Date: October 17, 2003

Comments Due: November 16, 2003

In reply, please refer to the Public Notice Number

**SUBJECT:** Application for a Department of the Army permit under the authority of Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act to construct a sewer pipeline across waters of the United States, including wetlands, for the proposed Lower Northwest Interceptor (LNWI) project.

**APPLICANT:** Joel Nonnweiler, Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District, 10545 Armstrong Avenue, Suite 101, Mather, California 95655-4153

**LOCATION:** The proposed pipeline would extend approximately 20 miles within both Sacramento and Yolo Counties, from the existing Natomas pump station (east of the San Juan Road crossing of I-5) to the Sacramento Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant (SRWTP) at the influent junction structure, as shown in the attached drawing.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The applicant's stated purpose is to construct a sewer interceptor line to convey wastewater from the Upper Northwest Interceptor to the SRWTP; to provide sewer service to West Sacramento; to provide relief for the existing Northeast Trunk System, the Dry Creek Interceptor and the Arden Pump Station; and to provide capacity for growth in the Rio Linda, Natomas, and West Sacramento areas, consistent with adopted land use plans.

The LNWI project would affect an approximately 80- to 240-foot-wide construction corridor, which includes construction of access roads, staging areas, pump stations, manholes, air release valves, blow-off valves, transition structures, valve structures, power lines, power substations and temporary batch plants for ongoing operations and maintenance support. The LNWI would cross the Natomas West Drainage Canal, Sacramento River, Babel Slough, Laguna and Morrison Creek, unnamed tributary drainages, and wetlands which are regulated by the Corps. Based on the available information the project will result in direct adverse affects to approximately 7.33 acres of these wetlands, with a permanent loss of approximately 0.11 acres of these wetlands. Approximately 7.22 acres of the wetland impacts are proposed to be temporary, based upon the applicant's plans to restore these areas to pre-project conditions following construction. Direct impacts to aquatic resources would occur primarily from trenching and access road construction. Permanent losses of waters would occur from construction of permanent gravel access roads for pipeline operation and maintenance. The proposed project also includes replacing the existing Reclamation District (RD) 900 drainage canal, which is not regulated by the Corps, from approximately Sacramento Avenue to Jefferson Boulevard, with an underground pipe. Tunneling construction methods will be used to install the pipeline underneath the RD 1000 canal, Sacramento River, Yolo Shortline Railroad (YSRR) and Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) tracks, Hwy 50/Business 80 freeway, Stone Boulevard, Barge Canal, Babel Slough, I-5, North Beach Lake levee, Morrison Creek and Laguna Creek and the SRWTP ring levee. The interceptor would cross the Sacramento River twice, once at the northern end of the alignment and once at the southern end. Tunnels under the Sacramento River would be located at a depth of approximately 40-50 feet below the river bottom. Tunneling methods are intended to avoid discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States to minimize potential adverse effects to these waters. To minimize individual and cumulative adverse effects to

waters, the applicant has stated they will implement various mitigation measures, including various best management practices during construction and restoring all temporarily affected areas to pre-construction contours. Proposed off-site compensatory mitigation for permanent losses of waters of the United States includes paying into the Natomas Basin Conservancy Fund for affects to aquatic resources within the Natomas Basin and purchasing mitigation credits at a Corps and U.S. Fish and Wildlife approved mitigation bank for affects to aquatic resources outside of the Natomas Basin.

The LNWI project has three components, the *Northern Force Main*, the *Central Gravity Line*, and the *Southern Force Main*. The Northern Force Main is proposed to be approximately 8 miles of parallel 60-inch-diameter pipes, buried under at least 5 feet of soil, where practical, or deeper to avoid utilities, freeways, or bodies of water, or shallower to avoid groundwater. Trenches would average 30 feet in depth, approximately 15 feet in width at the base, and approximately 60 feet in width at the top, and be dug using backhoes and excavators. Excavated dirt would be side-cast along the trench while the pipe is installed. Cement and gravel would be used to surround the pipe. The remainder of the trench would be back filled using native excavated dirt, and the trenched area returned to pre-construction contours after the pipe is installed. At stream crossings excavated material would be used for earthen dams to temporarily de-water the trench. Downstream flows would be maintained by diverting stream flows around the work areas. Excess dirt would be hauled off site to an upland disposal site. Permanent access roads would be constructed along some sections of the pipeline. The Central Gravity Line would be constructed as a single 120-inch-diameter, 4-mile long pipeline to carry sewage between the two force mains. The gravity pipeline would begin approximately 6 feet below the surface and descend to a depth of approximately 25 feet below ground surface. Proposed installation methods are the same as described above. The approximately 8-mile long Southern Force Main is proposed to be dual 66-inch-diameter force mains using the same construction techniques and methods as described above.

**AREA DESCRIPTION:** The project traverses agricultural, residential, and commercial areas in Sacramento and Yolo Counties and the Cities of Sacramento and West Sacramento, including agricultural lands that have been slated for development in the City of Sacramento General Plan, agricultural lands in Yolo County, and urban areas in Yolo and Sacramento Counties. Construction of the interceptor would occur on private property, RD easements, YSRR and UPRR rights of way and city and county road rights-of-way. Much of the project area is developed. The project also passes through undeveloped agricultural areas. Aquatic resources in the project area include freshwater marshes, seasonal emergent wetlands, drainageways (including rivers and streams), isolated seasonal wetlands, stormwater detention and treatment wetlands, and agricultural ditches. These resources are depicted approximately on the attached drawings although certain areas have not been verified by the Corps.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:** A cultural resources inventory and evaluation report prepared by the applicant's agent identified 31 cultural resources in the project area, of which three may be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The Corps will initiate consultation with the California State Historic Preservation Officer, as appropriate, concerning eligibility and effects determinations.

Based on the applicant's 2002 surveys, the project may species protected under the federal Endangered Species Act, including the giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*) and valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphous*). The Corps will initiate consultation, as appropriate, pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, for these effects.

An application and notification package for water quality certification and a 1601 Streambed Alteration Agreement notification package for the project have been submitted to the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board and the California Department of Fish and Game, Region 2, respectively.

The Sacramento County Department of Environmental Review and Assessment (DERA) completed a February 2003 *Final Program Environmental Impact Report for the Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District Interceptor System Master Plan 2000* (control number 99-PWE-0611, State Clearinghouse Numbers 1995012061 and 2001112085) and a May 30 2003, *Final Environmental Impact Report for Sacramento*

*County Regional Sanitation District Lower Northwest Interceptor Project* (Control Number 98-PWE-0612, State Clearinghouse Numbers 2001112085 and 2002092071). For information concerning these documents, contact DERA at 827 Seventh Street, Sacramento, California 95814, telephone (916) 874-7914, or the applicant.

The District Engineer has made these determinations based on information provided by the applicant and on the Corps' preliminary investigation.

**COMMENTS:** Interested parties are invited to submit written comments on or before **November 16, 2003**, to the attention of Michael Finan, Room 1480 at the letterhead address. Personal information in comment letters is subject to release to the public through the Freedom of Information Act. Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The Corps of Engineers is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, state, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps of Engineers to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

For additional information, please contact Joel Nonnweiler, Sacramento County Regional County Sanitation District telephone 916-875-6598, their agent, Sam Garcia with Jones and Stokes Associates, telephone 916-737-3000, or Michael Finan, at the letterhead address, telephone 916-557-5324.

Mark W. Connelly  
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Attachment(s): 4 Drawings