

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-5998-6]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Clear Lake Basin 2000 Project, Lake County, CA**AGENCY:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).**ACTION:** Notice of intent to prepare a draft environmental assessment and hold a scoping meeting to examine the proposed construction and operation of wetlands supplied by wastewater effluent from Lake County's Northwest Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant at Lakeport, California.**SUMMARY:** In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, EPA has identified a need to prepare a draft environmental assessment and therefore issues this document.**Background**

The Lake County Sanitation District (LACOSAN) has initiated a series of actions to improve the wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal facilities that it operates in the Clear Lake Basin of Lake County. These sets of actions are known collectively as Clear Lake Basin 2000, and include: water conservation/demand measures; improvements to existing wastewater collection and treatment systems; and improvements and modifications to effluent disposal methods. The overall objective is elimination of wastewater stresses to the Clear Lake watershed, and where possible, use of recycled wastewater for purposes of watershed restoration. The proposed action covered by this notice of intent includes two sub-projects of the Clear Lake Basin 2000 program initiative. The two projects are: (1) Lyons Creek wetlands and flow control facility; and (2) Nice-Burns Valley wetlands and pipeline. Each of these is more specifically described as follows:

1. Lyons Creek Wetlands & Flow Control Facility

This proposed component includes six wetland sites totaling 90 acres, and a flow control facility (FCF) required for supplying wastewater effluent to the wetlands. The activity is located in the Lyons Creek sub-watershed of the Clear Lake watershed. The wetlands will be constructed by creating levees in existing dry channels, and grading and shaping to create inter-mixed areas of deep water and shallow marsh habitat. A mix of open water/emergent marsh will be established to provide preferred

habitat for a broad variety of wetland-dependent birds and mammals. Treated effluent will be stored and conveyed to the wetlands via the FCF and distribution pipelines, respectively, and introduced to the wetland cells through buried pipes into deep water and inlet zones. During effluent application periods (primarily the summer months) these wetlands will be hydraulically loaded at rates that are balanced by the on-site losses of water through evaporation and transpiration by wetland vegetation. There will be no surface releases of treated effluent, consistent with the requirements of the State of California Regional Water Quality Control Board. During wet periods, effluent application will cease and stormwater flows will be allowed to accumulate in the wetland cells, providing flood detention and water quality improvement prior to release to downstream waters. The FCF is required to store effluent during the winter periods when high effluent flows are experienced, and effluent use by the wetlands is not possible. The FCF will have a capacity of approximately 2,300 acre-feet. Current storage at LACOSAN's Northwest Treatment Plant is insufficient to store effluent during extreme wet winters. The FCF will also provide a means to provide continuous summer flows to the wetlands, when water use demands are highest and effluent flows may be insufficient to sustain plant and aquatic life.

2. Nice-Burns Valley Wetlands & Pipeline

This proposed component includes 10 wetland sites totaling 176 acres, and a pipeline required for supplying wastewater effluent to the wetlands. The activity is located in a corridor that roughly parallels the northern shore of Clear Lake. The wetland sites are located along the corridor, beginning on the west near the community of Nice, and ending on the east in the Burns Valley sub-watershed. The pipeline will begin at LACOSAN's Northwest Treatment Plant, where effluent will be available, and will terminate at LACOSAN's Southeast Treatment Plant, which is located in the Burns Valley sub-watershed. As with the Lyons Creek component, the wetlands will be constructed by creating levees in existing dry channels, and grading and shaping to create inter-mixed areas of deep water and shallow marsh habitat. A mix of open water/emergent marsh will be established to provide preferred habitat for a broad variety of wetland-dependent birds and mammals. Treated effluent will be conveyed to the wetlands in the pipeline, and

introduced to the wetland cells through buried pipes into deep water and inlet zones. During effluent application periods (primarily the summer months) the wetlands will be hydraulically loaded at rates that are balanced by the on-site losses of water through evaporation and transpiration by wetland vegetation. Any water not utilized by the wetlands will be returned to the effluent pipeline for reuse at another site. In this way there will be no surface releases of treated effluent, consistent with the requirements of the State of California Regional Water Quality Control Board. During wet periods, effluent application will cease and stormwater flows will be allowed to accumulate in the wetland cells, providing flood detention and water quality improvement prior to release to downstream waters. The effluent pipeline, and two pump stations, are required to convey the stored effluent from LACOSAN's Northwest Treatment Plant to the wetland sites, and to receive operational transfers from the wetlands for reuse at another wetland site. The pipeline will be 16 inches in diameter, and will begin at a pump station located at the Northwest Treatment Plant. From the Northwest Treatment Plant, the pipeline will extend approximately 19 miles along the north shore of Clear Lake to an intermediate booster pump station located near the Clearlake Oaks effluent disposal ponds. From the booster pump station, the pipeline will extend south and east approximately two miles through public and private rights-of-way, and terminate at LACOSAN's Southeast Treatment Plant. Allowable pipe materials will include both ductile iron and PVC. It will be installed at depths appropriate for the adjacent buried utilities and traffic conditions (typically 3 to 4 feet of cover). The pump stations will consist of multiple vertical turbine or horizontal split-case pumps with automatic controls to stop the flow in the event of an emergency. Pump controls and electrical equipment will be located in a building to protect them from the elements and reduce noise impacts. Depending upon final design, surge tanks or other surge facilities will be located adjacent to the pump stations. Pump operating conditions and control data will be transmitted to LACOSAN's computer system for monitoring and automatic/operator control of the pumps.

All of the proposed actions covered by this notice of intent, except the wetlands proposed for the Nice-Burns Valley corridor, have been evaluated in an environmental impact report (EIR)

prepared and certified by LACOSAN in 1997 pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A portion of the effluent pipeline alignment between Clearlake Oaks and LACOSAN's Southeast Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant has also been evaluated in a previous CEQA document prepared by the Clearlake Oaks County Water District in 1997. The environmental assessment covered by this notice will incorporate information and findings from both previous environmental documents where relevant and appropriate.

ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives to be evaluated in the environmental assessment include:

1. The proposed action as described above. The proposed action is based on two previous alternatives analyses: (a) Alternative effluent disposal methods examined in LACOSAN's previous EIR for improvements to the Northwest Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant; and (b) an evaluation of alternative wetland sites in the Lyons Creek and Nice-Burns Valley project areas prepared by LACOSAN in 1998 during project planning.
2. Construction and operation of the FCF and effluent pipeline without the establishment of associated wetlands.
3. No action.

Scoping Process

The scope consists of a range of proposed actions and their potential impact on the surrounding community to be considered in the environmental assessment. It is the intent that there shall be an early and open process for determining the scope of issues to be addressed and for identifying the significant environmental issues related to the proposed action. Although scoping meetings are not required for environmental assessments, EPA and LACOSAN will hold a public scoping meeting on Friday, May 29, 1998, at 1:00 PM in the Lake County Board of Supervisors Chambers, Lake County Courthouse, 255 N. Forbes Street, Lakeport, CA. At this meeting the public will be invited to present issues and concerns they would like to see addressed in the environmental assessment.

Proposed Date of release

The draft environmental assessment is scheduled for release in October 1998.

Responsible Official

Felicia Marcus, Regional Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Mark Dellinger, Resources Manager/Project Manager, Lake County Sanitation District, 230A Main Street, Lakeport, CA 95453, telephone 707/263-2273, e-mail mark—d@co.lake.ca.us; or Kristin Gullatt, U.S. EPA, Region 9, 75 Hawthorne Street, Mail Code WTR-10, San Francisco, CA 94105, telephone 415/744-1937, e-mail Gullatt.Kristin@epamail.epa.gov.

Mike Schulz,

Acting Director, Region 9, Water Division.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-5998-7]

Notice of Proposed Revisions to the Approved Program To Administer the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permitting Program in New York Resulting in Part From Adoption of the Water Quality Guidance for the Great Lakes System

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has received for review and approval revisions to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program in New York. Most of the proposed revisions were adopted to comply with section 118(c) of the Clean Water Act and 40 CFR 132.4, although in some cases, the State has also proposed revisions that are not related to those required by section 118(c) of the CWA and 40 CFR 132.4. EPA invites public comment on whether EPA should approve these revisions pursuant to 40 CFR 123.62 and 132.5.

DATES: Comments on whether EPA should approve the revisions to New York's NPDES program must be received in writing by May 20, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on these documents may be submitted to Kathleen C. Callahan, Director, Division of Environmental Planning and Protection, Attn: GLI Implementation Procedures, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 290 Broadway, New York, New York 10007. In the alternative, EPA will accept comments electronically. Comments should be sent to the following Internet E-mail address: jackson.wayne@epamail.epa.gov. Electronic comments must be submitted in an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and any form of

encryption. EPA will print electronic comments in hard-copy paper form for the official administrative record. EPA will attempt to clarify electronic comments if there is an apparent error in transmission. Comments provided electronically will be considered timely if they are submitted electronically by 11:59 p.m. (Eastern time) May 20, 1998.

Interested persons may request a public hearing regarding whether EPA should approve, pursuant to 40 CFR 123.62, and 132.5(g), those portions of the States' submissions that revise the States' approved National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permitting program. EPA will determine based on requests received if there is significant interest to warrant a public hearing.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Wayne Jackson, Community and Ecosystems Protection Branch, Division of Environmental Planning and Protection, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 290 Broadway, New York, New York, 10007, or telephone him at (212) 637-3807.

Copies of the rules adopted by New York, and other related materials submitted by the State in support of these revisions, are available for review at: EPA, Region 2, 290 Broadway, 24th Floor, New York, New York; and, NYSDEC, 50 Wolf Road, Room 310 C, Albany, New York. To access the docket material in New York, call Wayne Jackson at (212) 637-3807 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Eastern time) (Monday-Friday); in Albany, New York, call Teresa Deihnsner at 518-457-7937 between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Eastern time) (Monday-Friday).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On March 23, 1995, EPA published the Final Water Quality Guidance for the Great Lakes System (Guidance) pursuant to section 118(c)(2) of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1268(c)(2). (March 23, 1995, 60 FR 15366). The Guidance, which was codified at 40 CFR Part 132, requires the Great Lakes States to adopt and submit to EPA for approval water quality criteria, methodologies, policies and procedures that are consistent with the Guidance. 40 CFR 132.4. & 132.5. EPA is required to approve the State's submission within 90 days or notify the State that EPA has determined that all or part of the submission is inconsistent with the Clean Water Act or the Guidance and identify any necessary changes to obtain EPA approval. If the State fails to make the necessary changes within 90 days, EPA must publish a notice in the **Federal Register** identifying the approved and disapproved elements of the submission