

COMMENT LETTER 31 - APRA MEMBERS, FRIENDS OF THE ESTEROS, FRANK & BEA GLAZIER (NO DATE), RECEIVED SEPTEMBER 24, 1996

Response to Comment 31-1

Comment Summary: The comment states that the Groundwater Monitoring as proposed in the Draft EIR/EIS will not be effective in establishing baseline conditions because construction of the reservoir dams during the monitoring will interfere with the aquifers and dry up the wells.

The City would be prepared to provide a replacement water supply as soon as there is any evidence that water supply is being affected. To ensure that any changes are detected immediately, the EIR/EIS authors agree that groundwater monitoring should begin one year prior to reservoir construction because groundwater levels could decrease substantially after construction and prior to filling.

Therefore, the following changes are made to the Draft EIR/EIS:

Page 2-85. The first sentence in the sixth paragraph is revised as follows:

The City shall begin quarterly groundwater monitoring a minimum of one year prior to reservoir ~~filling~~ construction to establish baseline conditions.

Page 2-86. The first paragraph of the Timing section is revised as follows:

Start: The City shall begin the well survey and hydrogeologic study at least one year prior to reservoir construction to establish baseline conditions. Quarterly groundwater sampling and nitrate analysis shall begin one year prior to ~~filling~~ construction of the reservoir.

Page 2-87. The following sentence is added at the end of the first paragraph of the Description section:

Monitoring should begin one year prior to reservoir construction.

Page 2-87. The first paragraph of the Timing section is revised as follows:

Start: The monitoring shall begin one year prior to ~~filling the~~ reservoir construction.

Response to Comment 31-2

Comment Summary: The comment inquires about the impacts of irrigation applications of reclaimed water to shallow well water in the Two Rock Valley.

Less than significant groundwater quality impacts will result from agricultural irrigation with reclaimed water. Potential impacts are discussed in the Draft EIR/EIS on page 4.5-

52. Impacts to shallow groundwater in the West County are specifically addressed on page 5-17 of Appendix H-1 (Hydrology of Storage/Reuse Areas and Evaluation of Potential Impacts to Groundwater) in the Draft EIR/EIS.

Response to Comment 31-3

Comment Summary: The comment asks how reclaimed water irrigation will be prevented from affecting water quality in Americano Creek.

Section 6 in Appendix I-16 (Water Quality Impact Analysis Report Volume I - Text) of the Draft EIR/EIS describes impacts of irrigation on surface water quality in West County. While numerous measures have been identified in the Draft EIR/EIS to minimize impacts (i.e., 2.2.1 through 2.2.6, and 2.5.1 through 2.5.3), the EIR/EIS shows that irrigation impacts on West County creeks and the esteros cannot be completely prevented. Measure 2.2.3 discusses “Small scale drainage improvements (ditches and drain systems)” on page 2-24, but “entire area diversion ditches” as described in the comment are not proposed. Development of site-specific Irrigation and Conservation Management Programs may include use of berms for specific conditions, but berms are not identified as a requirement in the Draft EIR/EIS.

Response to Comment 31-4

Comment Summary: The comment asks how impacts in Estero de San Antonio will be addressed. The comment also notes that irrigation within restored riparian corridors is unacceptable.

As described in Response to Comment 31-3, unavoidable impacts of Alternative 3 will occur in Estero de San Antonio. Impacts are minimized with Measures 2.2.1 through 2.2.6, and 2.5.1 through 2.5.3, as described in Section 2 of the Draft EIR/EIS. Measure 2.2.5 (page 2-28) includes buffer zones between creeks and irrigation areas, consistent with the riparian corridor restoration program.

Response to Comment 31-5

Comment Summary: The comment questions how the West County Alternative can be considered since a dam failure could be devastating. The comment further asks if the City of Santa Rosa, Harland Bartholomew Associates and Army Corps of Engineers are willing to take on the liability of a dam failure.

The catastrophic failure of a dam is discussed in Section 4.19 of the Draft EIR/EIS. Liability would be determined by law, dependent on the facts of the specific occurrence.