

COMMENT LETTER 32 - WESTSIDE ROAD WINERIES, RUSSIAN RIVER TASK FORCE, MARTIN GRIFFIN, M.D. (SEPTEMBER 24, 1996), RECEIVED SEPTEMBER 24, 1996

Response to Comment 32-1

Comment Summary: The comment (i.e., figure) indicates that waste water and polluted storm water are currently being discharged via Mark West Creek into the Russian River and threaten to contaminate the drinking water for Marin and Sonoma Counties. It also states that the Russian River watershed has been mismanaged leading to the highest rate of repetitive flooding west of the Mississippi.

Drinking water sources in the River are identified in pages 4.7-2 through 4.7-6 of the Draft EIR/EIS. The potential impacts to drinking water from the Project are the subject of Section 4.7 (Public Health and Safety) in the Draft EIR/EIS and Appendix J-3 (Human Health Risks From Chemical and Biological Components of Reclaimed Water). The water quality impact of stormwater is not related to the Project and is not evaluated in the Draft EIR/EIS. The Sonoma County Water Agency is regulated by the State Department Health Services and provides potable water from the Russian River which meets all federal, state, and local health standards. Section 4.6 of the Draft EIR/EIS provides data on existing water quality of the Russian River and Mark West Creek on pages 4.6-10 through 4.6-33.

As evaluated in Section 4.4 of the Draft EIR/EIS, the Long-Term Project does not have significant impacts upon flooding, except in the cumulative scenario. There are no cumulative impacts to drinking water. Refer to pages 4.4-29 through 4.4-34 for a discussion of cumulative impacts. Sufficient mitigation to reduce even the cumulative impact to a level below significance has been provided.

Response to Comment 32-2

Comment Summary: The comment (i.e., figure) indicates that reclaimed water floods Sonoma County Water Agency intakes during storm events with contaminated mud and water.

The drawing in Comment 32-2 suggests reclaimed water is discharged to the Laguna (labeled Mark West Creek in the comment) at a location immediately upstream of the Russian River. Reclaimed water is currently, and will continue to be, discharged to the Laguna de Santa Rosa and Santa Rosa Creek. Turbidity ("cloudiness") of reclaimed water is very low, and is approximately the same during storms as during clear weather. Therefore, the Project will not contribute to any contamination of Sonoma County Water Agency intakes with mud during storms. In addition, the concentration of reclaimed water in the River decreases during storms, and discharge ceases when the River is above flood stage. Even if maximum discharge rates are increased, the Project will not change discharge capacity during storm events that may flood the area around the intakes.

Section 4.7 of the Draft EIR/EIS concluded that "Direct discharge of reclaimed water into the Laguna de Santa Rosa or the Russian River will not adversely affect water quality at drinking water sources and would not adversely affect human health via other potential exposure pathways" (see page 4.7-61). Neither direct nor cumulative impacts are predicted. Thus, none of the Project alternatives will result in any change in the quality of water that floods the area around the intakes. The quality of sediment that might be transported from the Laguna into the River during a storm event will not be significantly different from that transported under the existing condition, as described in Appendix I-13 (Sediment Quality Characterization and Impacts Assessment) of the Draft EIR/EIS. Refer also to Response to Comment 17-6.

Response to Comment 32-3

Comment Summary: The comment (i.e., figure) indicates that a portion of the Russian River floodplain containing existing infiltration ponds is subject to flooding and that Windsor and Santa Rosa wastewater enter the Russian River via Mark West Creek.

The Project's impact on the Sonoma County Water Agency's infiltration basins is addressed in the Response to Comment 32-2.