

# Notice of Preparation

**Date:** March 4, 2016

**To:** California Office of Planning and Research, Responsible and Trustee Agencies and Interested Parties

**Subject:** Notice of Preparation of a Program Environmental Impact Report

**Project:** Recycled Water Master Plan Update

**Lead Agency:** Castaic Lake Water Agency

**Review Period:** March 4, 2016 through April 3, 2016

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared to notify agencies and interested parties that the Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) as the Lead Agency will prepare a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for a proposed update of the CLWA 2002 Recycled Water Master Plan (proposed project).

The 2002 Recycled Water Master Plan (RWMP) proposed to develop and construct a recycled water system to serve the Santa Clarita Valley Area, satisfying irrigation and industrial demands with recycled water rather than potable water and thereby reducing demands on its potable water supplies. The 2002 RWMP evaluated several components and categorized them into 11 phases. Phase 1 improvements have already been constructed and include a recycled water pump station at the Valencia Wastewater Reclamation Plant (Valencia WRP), an aboveground recycled water reservoir tank (No. 1) and a pipeline between the Valencia WRP and the reservoir tank. The improvements under Phases 2 through 11 were never constructed.

CLWA has proposed to update the Phase 2 improvements of the 2002 RWMP to identify a new supply of recycled water in order to partially meet future water demands in the face of the ongoing drought in California and expected increases in water demand. The purpose of the RWMP update is to evaluate the expansion of the existing recycled water system through: extension of the pipeline distribution system to new end users, the addition of pump stations, the use of operational storage reservoirs, and the possible use of recycled water to augment local groundwater. Since the preparation of the 2002 RWMP, several projects have been identified that will form Phase 2 of the RWMP update. The four identified projects include the following:

- Phase 2A would distribute recycled water from the existing Valencia WRP to existing industrial and irrigation users within the Valencia and Saugus areas in the City of Santa Clarita.
- Phase 2B would involve a partnership between CLWA, Santa Clarita Water Division (SCWD), and the Vista Canyon development to utilize recycled water produced from the Vista Canyon Water Factory (VCWF), which is proposed as part of the Vista Canyon land development and is expected to be in service at the time the development is completed.

- Phase 2C would utilize recycled water from the Valencia WRP to serve existing irrigation and industrial users within the Valencia and Newhall areas in the City of Santa Clarita.
- Phase 2D would utilize recycled water from Valencia WRP to serve existing irrigation users within the Stevenson Ranch area.

In addition to these projects, the RWMP update will include additional future alignments that would extend from the Phase 1 or Phase 2 alignments.

The use of recycled water to recharge groundwater would be explored at a conceptual level in the RWMP Update. The concept would likely involve groundwater recharge via surface spreading at an off-stream location near the Santa Clara River in the eastern part of the Santa Clarita Valley or near the Castaic Creek area or both. The RWMP update would provide for recharge of excess available recycled water in the winter and off-peak irrigation months.

**Project Location:** The CLWA service area is located in southern California; encompassing 195-square miles, the service area includes the City of Santa Clarita and surrounding unincorporated communities such as Castaic, Stevenson Ranch, Val Verde, and Westridge. The majority of the service area is located in Los Angeles County, with approximately 20-square miles extending into unincorporated rural portions of Ventura County, although this area currently receives no water service. The RWMP update will include recommendations for the construction of facilities that would be within CLWA service area boundaries.

**About the Lead Agency:** CLWA has a contract with the State of California Department of Water Resources to purchase water from the State Water Project (SWP) and to sell/convey this water to four domestic retail water purveyors in the Santa Clarita Valley. Approximately 55 percent of water supply of the Santa Clarita Valley is supplied by CLWA with imported water from the SWP and other imported sources to meet the municipal and industrial demands within its service area. When sufficient imported water is not available, the balance is met with banked imported supplies to supplement local groundwater provided by the purveyors. The imported water is delivered to Castaic Lake through SWP facilities. From Castaic Lake, which serves as the terminal reservoir of the SWP's West Branch, the imported water is treated at CLWA's Earl Schmidt Filtration Plant or at its Rio Vista Water Treatment Plant and is thereafter delivered to the domestic water purveyors through transmission lines owned and operated by CLWA.

**Public Comments:** CLWA is soliciting the views of interested persons and agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information to be evaluated in the PEIR. In accordance with CEQA, agencies are requested to review the project description in this NOP and provide their comments on environmental issues related to the statutory responsibilities of the agency. The PEIR will be used by the CLWA Board of Directors when considering approval of the RWMP update as well as for any related discretionary approvals.

All comments to the NOP are due no later than April 4, 2016. Please send your comments to the mailing address or email address shown below. Include a return address or email address and a contact name in your agency or group with your comments.

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**Scoping Meeting:** A scoping meeting will be held on **March 24, 2016 at 2:00 PM** to receive comments regarding the scope and content of the PEIR. The scoping meeting will include a brief presentation providing an overview of the proposed program and the CEQA process. After the presentation, oral comments will be accepted. Written comment forms will be supplied for those who wish to submit comments in writing at the scoping meeting. Written comments also may be submitted anytime during the NOP review period. The scoping meeting date, time and location are as follows:

March 24, 2016 at 2:00 PM  
Newhall County Water District  
23780 North Pine Street  
Newhall, CA 91321

# Introduction

The Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA), as the Lead Agency pursuant to CEQA, is proposing to implement the Recycled Water Master Plan Update that outlines a programmatic plan to accelerate the expansion of their existing recycled water system to offset potable water demands and improve water supply reliability. During years with normal precipitation conditions, 55 percent of water supply of the Santa Clarita Valley is supplied by CLWA with imported water from the SWP and other imported sources to meet the municipal and industrial demands within its service area. The State Water Project (SWP) is CLWA’s primary supplier of imported water; SWP water supply is subject to variability depending on the precipitation and snowpack and the amount of water in SWP system storage. When sufficient imported water is not available to the CLWA, the balance is met with banked imported supplies to supplement the local groundwater provided by the water purveyors within the CLWA service area. It is anticipated that the demand for water will continue to increase in future years. To meet increase reliable water supply, CLWA proposes to expand the use of recycled water within the project area by updating the 2002 Recycled Water Master Plan (proposed project). CLWA is initiating the preparation of a Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) evaluating the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project.

## Proposed Project Phases

The proposed project consists of a planning document that will make recommendations that will ultimately involve the construction of pipelines, storage tanks, and pump stations. The Phase 2 Project will include four initial extensions (2A, 2B, 2C, and 2D). Three additional phases will expand Phase 2. **Table 1** below lists the estimated amounts of recycled water produced and implementation dates associated with each of the phases.

TABLE 1: Recycled Water Production and Implementation Dates by Project Phase

Phase	Total Recycled Water Produced (AF)	Water Retailers* and Associated Amount (AF)	Implementation Date
2A	512	SCWD – 224 VWC – 288	2025
2B	300	SCWD – 300	2020
2C	1,333	NCWD – 208 VWC – 1,125	2022
2D	186	VWC – 186	2022
<b>Total: 2,331</b>			

\*Water Retailers:  
 SCWD: Santa Clarita Water Division  
 VWC: Valencia Water Company  
 NCWD: Newhall County Water District

The proposed Phase 2 alignments are shown in **Figure 1** (attached) and are described in more detail below.

### ***Phase 2A***

Phase 2A proposes to distribute recycled water from the existing Valencia Water Reclamation Plant to existing irrigation and industrial users within the Valencia and Saugus areas in the City of Santa Clarita. Phase 2A would include the construction of approximately 5 miles of new 16-inch and 12-inch pipeline that would convey tertiary treated recycled water from Valencia WRP to the east. The pipeline alignment would tee off the existing Phase 1 pipeline at The Old Road, extend along approximately 1.8 miles of Rye Canyon Road, and travel about 2.5 miles east along Newhall Ranch Road. Phase 2A includes three alternatives; the first would have the pipeline continue along Newhall Ranch Road and the second would have the pipeline extend up Bouquet Canyon Road. The third Phase 2A alternative involves the pipeline terminating at a recycled water storage tank located at the Rio Vista Water Treatment Plant site.

### ***Phase 2B***

Phase 2B proposes partnership between CLWA, SCWD, and Vista Canyon Ranch development to utilize recycled water produced from the Vista Canyon Water Factory (VCWF), which has not yet been constructed. VCWF would be located within the 185-acre development site located immediately south of State Route 14, west of La Veda Avenue, north of the Metrolink rail line, and east of the Colony Townhome in the City of Santa Clarita. Although developed by Vista Canyon Ranch, the VCWF is proposed for operation by the City of Santa Clarita and would be within service boundaries of CLWA and SCWD.

### ***Phase 2C***

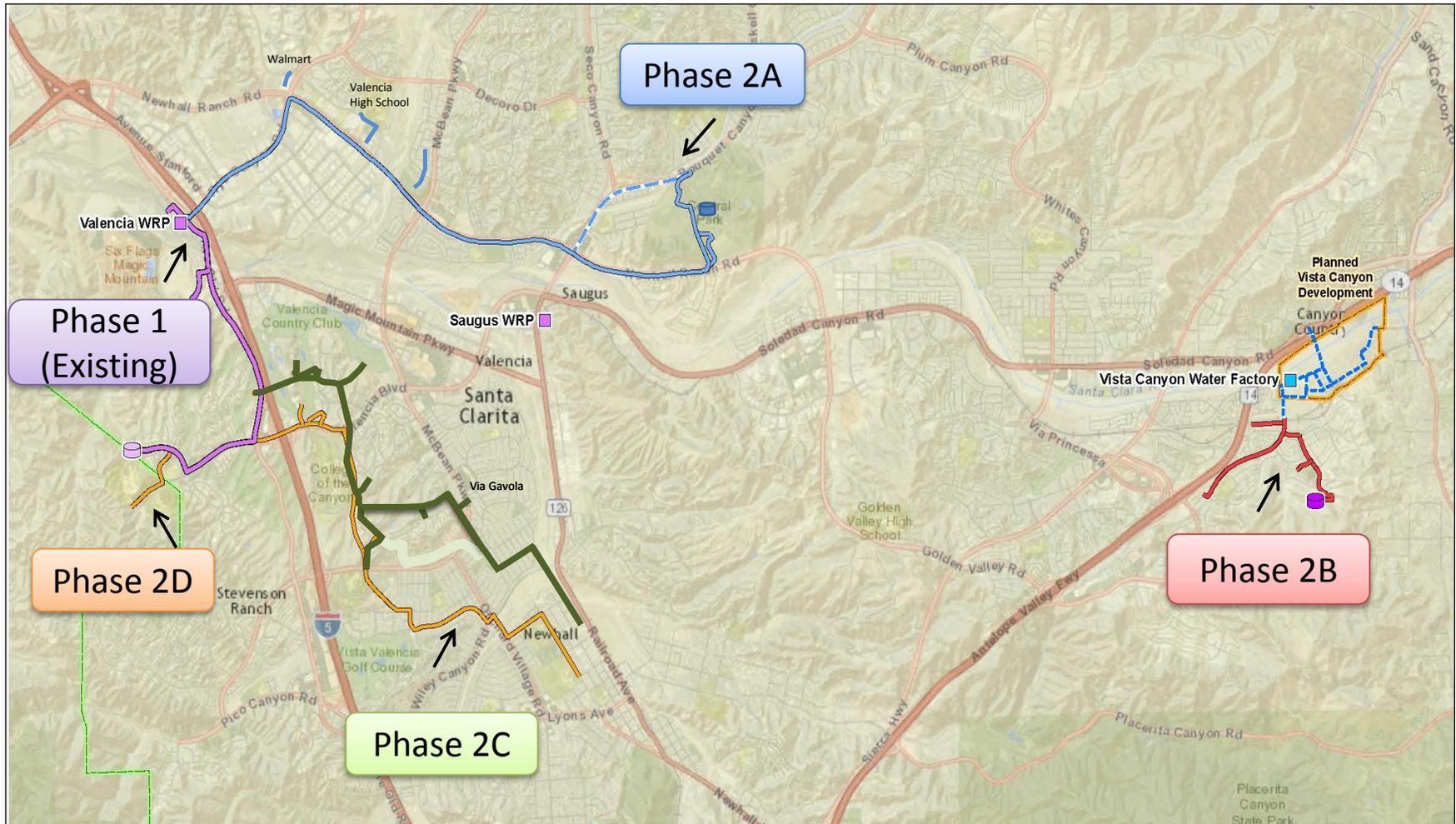
Phase 2C would utilize recycled water from the Valencia WRP to serve existing irrigation and industrial users within the Valencia and Newhall areas in the City of Santa Clarita. Phase 2C includes construction of approximately six miles of new 20-inch, 16-inch, and 12-inch pipeline that conveys tertiary treated recycled water from Valencia WRP to customers, such as College of the Canyons, Hart High, and Newhall Park. The pipeline alignment would tee off the existing Phase 1 pipeline at The Old Road and extend along Valencia Boulevard, Rockwell Canyon Road, McBean Parkway, Orchard Village Road, 16th Street, to Newhall Avenue where it terminates at Newhall Elementary School at a recycled water tank. Industrial and non-potable irrigation demands adjacent to the alignment would be served.

### ***Phase 2D***

Phase 2D of the project would utilize recycled water from Valencia WRP to serve existing customers within the Stevenson Ranch area. Phase 2D includes construction of approximately 1 mile of new 12-inch pipeline and a booster pump station that conveys tertiary treated recycled water from the Recycled Water Reservoir #1 to West Ranch High School. Recycled Water Reservoir #1 is an existing reservoir tank that receives its recycled water through approximately 2.8 miles of pipeline Valencia WRP.

In addition to these projects, the RWMP Update will include additional future alignments that would extend from the Phase 1 or Phase 2 alignments.

The use of recycled water to recharge groundwater would be explored at a conceptual level in the RWMP Update. The concept would likely involve groundwater recharge via surface spreading at an off-stream location near the Santa Clara River in the eastern part of the Santa Clarita Valley or near the Castaic Creek area or both. The project would provide for recharge of excess available recycled water in the winter and off-peak irrigation months.



SOURCE: Castiac Lake Water Agency, 2016

CLWA Recycled Water Master Plan Update . 150804

**Figure 1**  
Phase 2 Alignments

# Potential Environmental Impacts

The PEIR will assess the physical changes to the environment that would likely result from the construction and operation of the projects in the RWMP update, including direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts. Potential impacts are summarized below. The PEIR will identify mitigation measures, if necessary, to avoid, minimize, and offset potentially significant impacts of the project. The projects described in the PEIR would be subject to a separate approval process and CEQA compliance, though the Final PEIR could be used to “tier” off of for purposes of subsequent environmental documentation.

## ***Aesthetics***

Potential direct and indirect impacts could occur both during construction and after the recycled water facilities and related infrastructure are built and operating. The PEIR will identify the visible changes to the natural and man-made environment, including development of the storage tanks, pump stations, and recharge basin within the viewshed. The PEIR will identify feasible mitigation measures if necessary to reduce potential significant impacts.

## ***Air Quality***

Construction and operation of the proposed project could cause air emissions. Air emissions could result from construction equipment exhaust, ground disturbance during construction, material hauling, construction employee-commute travel, vehicle operational maintenance trips, and vehicle trips associated with any increases in employment. Operation of the facilities may potentially generate emissions associated with energy use and from mobile sources that may include deliveries and maintenance. The PEIR will estimate pollutant emissions from construction and operational activities and will develop mitigation measures if necessary to reduce potential significant impacts.

## ***Biological Resources***

The project could result in changes to wildlife habitat and disturbance of sensitive species during construction or operation. Site grading and introduction of new aboveground storage facilities could intercept with existing floral and faunal species or their habitats. The PEIR will evaluate the potential for construction and operation of the proposed project to affect biological resources, and will also discuss local ordinances and state and federal regulations governing biological resources. The PEIR will develop mitigation measures as necessary to avoid, minimize, and offset potential significant impacts.

## ***Cultural Resources***

The proposed project would require construction of facilities and pipelines that could disturb known or unknown archeological sites, paleontological resources, and/or human remains where groundbreaking activities occur. The PEIR will assess the potential effects of the proposed project on cultural resources, including archaeological, historic, paleontological, and Native American resources. Mitigation measures will be identified if necessary to reduce potential significant impacts.

## ***Geology, Soils, and Seismicity***

The proposed project would require construction of recycled water facilities that could be subject to potential seismic and geologic hazards, including ground shaking, liquefaction, soil instability, soil erosion, expansive soils, and landslides. The PEIR will describe local and state-wide building codes and policies that would apply to the project that could mitigate or avoid potentially

significant effects. The PEIR will identify feasible mitigation measures if necessary to reduce potential significant impacts.

### ***Greenhouse Gas Emissions***

Implementation of the proposed project would result in the generation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions associated with construction and operations. The PEIR will estimate construction-related emissions and long-term operational emissions, including total CO<sub>2</sub>-equivalent emissions for evaluating the effects of GHGs. The PEIR will examine the project's effects on global climate change and evaluate consistency of the project with the State's GHG emissions reduction goals. The PEIR will identify feasible mitigation measures if necessary to reduce potential significant impacts.

### ***Hazards and Hazardous Materials***

Contaminated soils and groundwater could be encountered during construction of the recycled water facilities. The PEIR will assess wildfire risk and the potential for encountering contaminated soils and the release of hazardous materials, and for potentially significant impacts, will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce potential significant environmental impacts.

### ***Hydrology and Water Quality***

Construction and operation of the proposed project could affect storm water quality and drainage patterns. Extraction and injection of recycled water could impact groundwater resources. The PEIR will evaluate the project's potential impacts on hydrology and water quality, and, for potentially significant impacts will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce potential significant environmental impacts.

### ***Land Use***

The proposed project would construct facilities within residential, developed areas. The PEIR will evaluate the compatibility of the proposed project components with adjacent land uses and will identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce potential significant environmental impacts.

### ***Noise***

Implementation of the proposed project would require construction and operation of project elements that would potentially generate noise and vibration. Construction activities that could be a significant source of noise and vibrations include trucking operations, use of heavy construction equipment (e.g., graders, cranes, and frontend loaders), and pile driving activities. During project operations, fixed sources of noise could be established. The PEIR will describe the local noise policies and ordinances. The PEIR will identify potential noise impacts associated with construction and operation and develop mitigation strategies if necessary to reduce potential significant impacts.

### ***Population and Housing/Growth Inducement***

The proposed project would provide wastewater treatment for existing and planned population within the service area. The PEIR will evaluate the potential for the project to induce or accommodate growth. The PEIR will identify current population and employment projections and identify local planning jurisdictions with the authority to approve growth and mitigate secondary effects of growth.

### ***Public Services***

The proposed project would construct new recycled water conveyance facilities. The PEIR will assess the potential for the proposed project to affect police and fire protection services, schools, parks, and recreational facilities and develop mitigation strategies if necessary to reduce potential significant impacts.

### ***Traffic and Transportation***

Construction of the proposed project could affect traffic on local roadways as a result of vehicle trips associated with hauling of material and equipment, road closures and detours, increased demand for parking to serve construction workers, and increase in traffic hazards caused by construction activities. The PEIR will evaluate the potential for construction vehicles, lane closures, or road closures to impact traffic and circulation and will identify mitigation strategies to reduce any potential significant impacts.

### ***Utilities and Energy***

The proposed project could result in the temporary disruption of services to adjacent land uses. The PEIR will describe the existing water, electricity, telecommunications, and gas utilities serving the local communities. Existing and projected regional utility supplies, demands, and facilities will be described along with any constraints or service deficiencies in the region. The PEIR will evaluate the project's potential to affect utilities and will identify necessary mitigation measures to reduce any potential significant impacts. .

### ***Cumulative Impacts***

The PEIR will evaluate potential cumulative impacts associated with the project for all environmental topics when considered with other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects in the area. The PEIR will identify planned projects in the area including planned development, water supply, and wastewater treatment projects and will identify mitigation strategies to reduce any potential significant impacts.