

Federal Emergency Management Agency
PUBLIC NOTICE
Notice of Availability of the Supplemental Environmental Assessment

Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the South Bay Force Main Replacement and Resiliency Project (HMGP Number: 4344-540-19).

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is proposing to assist in the funding of a project in Humboldt County, California. Funding would be provided through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) as authorized by Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Assistance and Emergency Relief Act. FEMA has prepared a draft Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the proposed project pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and FEMA's implementing Instruction. The draft SEA evaluates alternatives for compliance with applicable environmental laws, including the National Historic Preservation Act, Executive Orders 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), 11988 (Floodplain Management), and 12898 (Environmental Justice). The alternatives evaluated in the draft SEA are: (1) no action, and (2) the Proposed Action to increase the resilience of a Humboldt Community Services District (HCSD) force main by replacing approximately 2.1 miles of existing asphalt-cement sanitary sewer force main with high-density polyethylene line to reduce risks from flooding and the potential for saltwater intrusion.

FEMA prepared this SEA because, although the type of work proposed under the Proposed Action does fall under the range of actions evaluated in the December 2014 Final Programmatic Environmental Assessment for Recurring Actions in Arizona, California, and Nevada (PEA), the Proposed Action would require trenching and other ground-disturbing construction activities in areas that are identified as freshwater and emergent wetland and freshwater forested/shrub wetland features, as mapped by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory. While the project activities are consistent with those described in PEA Section 2.3.4, PEA Best Management Practice (BMP) #1 (Water Resources) requires that no work be conducted within 50 feet of a wetland or waterbody. Due to the location of existing HCSD infrastructure, and the confirmed location of the NWI-mapped wetland features, there is no feasible alternative to avoid all work within 50 feet of wetland features consistent with this BMP.

The draft SEA is available for agency and public review on FEMA's website at https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fema_oehp-hgmp-sea-south-bay-force-2021.pdf and the HCSD's website at http://humboldtcsd.org/sites/default/files/HMGP%204344-540-19_Humboldt%20CSD_SEA.pdf. If no substantive issues are identified during the comment period on the draft SEA, FEMA will finalize the SEA, issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI), and fund the project. The FONSI will be posted to the same website as listed above. FEMA will not publish another public notice for this project unless substantive comments on the draft SEA are received.

The deadline for submitting written comments on the draft SEA is February 18, 2022. Comments should be mailed to: Regional Environmental Officer, FEMA Region IX, 1111 Broadway, Suite 1200, Oakland, CA 94607-4052 or comments can be submitted via e-mail (preferred) to fema-rix-ehp-documents@fema.dhs.gov; please include "South Bay Force Main" in your subject line.