

BIOGAS RENEWABLE GENERATION PROJECT FINAL INITIAL STUDY / MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING, IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURE
March 9, 2018

3.19 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

- a. *Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?*

Based on the evaluation completed for the Initial Study, implementation of the Proposed Project has the potential to result in significant impacts to biological resources. Given the integral features incorporated into the Proposed Project's design and operation and the implementation of recommended mitigation measures, potential impacts to biological resources can be mitigated to a less than significant level. The Proposed Project does not include a component with the potential to otherwise degrade the quality of the environment or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory.

- b. *Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)*

The cumulative impacts analysis provided here is consistent with Section 15130(a) of the CEQA Guidelines in which the analysis of cumulative effects of a project is based on two determinations: Is the combined impact of this project and other projects significant? Is the project's incremental effect cumulatively considerable, causing the combined impact of the projects evaluated to become significant? The cumulative impact must be analyzed only if the combined impact is significant and the project's incremental effect is found to be cumulatively considerable (CEQA Guidelines 15130(a)(2) and (3)).

Projects Considered

To assess cumulative impacts, the City considered incremental effects of the Proposed Project in connection with effects from past, current, and probable future projects that may result in similar impacts. The types of projects considered include other power generating, landfill related operations and projects near the Project Area.

The City reviewed projects within Glendale and the nearby Cities of Pasadena and Los Angeles and focused on projects of a similar nature to the Proposed Project that may result in similar environmental impacts. These projects include:

- Grayson Power Plant Repowering Project – The City of Glendale is proposing to repower the existing Grayson Power Plant with construction planned for 2018 – 2020. The Grayson Power Plant is located approximately five miles west of the Proposed Project. Public scoping meetings for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the repowering

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project have been conducted and a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is being prepared.

- ~~Biogas Renewable Generation~~ Scholl Canyon Landfill Expansion Project – The City is proposing to increase the life of the Scholl Canyon Landfill and is evaluating two alternative development scenarios to increase capacity of the landfill with construction occurring from 2020 – 2040. A Draft EIR was circulated for public review in March 2014.
- Green Waste Digester Project – The City is evaluating approaches to comply with California Assembly Bill 1594 which precludes accounting of green waste used as alternative daily cover in the 50 percent waste diversion by recycling requirements of State law. Use of green waste digesters which would produce methane for use as fuel in vehicles or for power production is being evaluated to meet the requirements of this law by 2020. The location of digesters, if used, has not been determined.

Environmental Factors Not Discussed Further

The analysis of potential environmental impacts in Section 3.0 concluded that the Proposed Project would have no impact to Agriculture and Forestry Resources, Cultural Resources, Mineral Resources, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, or Tribal Cultural Resources. The Proposed Project would therefore not have the potential to contribute to cumulative impacts in these issue areas and they are not considered further in this analysis.

Environmental Factors Analyzed Cumulatively

The following is a discussion of potential cumulative impacts.

Aesthetics

The Proposed Project would not degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surrounding area. The incremental amount of light and glare generated by the Proposed Project would be minimal due to the design measures incorporated into the Project, and the Project site is located in a portion of the existing landfill that is negligibly visible from public viewing locations. The Proposed Project and Grayson Power Plant Repowering Project are spatially separated by approximately five miles and do not have the potential to adversely impact the same viewsheds. The location of the digester project is speculative. Even if the digester project were located at the Scholl Canyon Landfill, both facilities would not be visually out of character with the existing or Proposed Project and would not impact a scenic vista, scenic highway or introduce substantial night lighting. Construction and operation of the Proposed Project, when considered in combination with potential aesthetic impacts from other projects, would not degrade the existing visual character of the site and its surroundings as visible from public viewpoints. The Proposed Project would not have cumulatively considerable aesthetics impacts.

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Air Quality

Future attainment of state and federal AAQS is a function of successful implementation of SCAQMD's attainment plans. As a result, the application of the thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants is relevant to the determination of whether a project's individual emissions would have a cumulatively significant impact on regional air quality. In accordance with SCAQMD methodology, if a project's emissions are less than the thresholds of significance for criteria pollutants, the project would not be expected to result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant that the SCAQMD basin is in non-attainment. Localized air quality impacts to the nearest sensitive receptor anticipated from the construction and operation of the Proposed Project is less than significant. Toxic air contaminants exposure on the nearest sensitive receptors would be less than significant. Because the Proposed Project and the Grayson Power Plant Repowering Project are geographically separated by approximately five miles, they do not have the potential to cumulatively contribute to localized criteria air pollutant or toxic air contaminant exposure impacts. The location of the digester project is speculative and even if located in close proximity to the Proposed Project, sufficient detail on the digester project is not available by which to quantify potential cumulative air quality impacts. However, it is reasonable to assume that the digester project would be subject to CEQA review and would therefore be required to analyze potential cumulative impacts in consideration of other projects, including the Proposed Project. No significant impacts are expected from the odors associated with construction or operation of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would not have cumulatively considerable air quality impacts.

Biological Resources

The Proposed Project will result in permanent impacts to 0.37 acre of native vegetation. The Proposed Project could result in permanent impacts to 6.7 acres of native vegetation (Landfill Expansion Variation 2). The proposed Grayson Repowering Project would not result in impacts to native vegetation. The location of the digester is speculative and information to evaluate its potential impact to biological impacts is not available. As a result, there is a potential cumulative impact of 7.07 acres of permanent impacts to native vegetation. No rare plants were detected during seasonally timed rare plant surveys conducted in support of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project would avoid impacts to adjacent coast live oak woodland and would permanently impact 0.02 acres of scrub oak-chamise chaparral, both special status communities. The Proposed Project would not contribute to potential cumulative impacts to special status plant species and would have a negligible contribution to potential cumulative impacts to special status communities. Pre-construction clearance and nesting bird surveys/protection measures further limit the Proposed Project's potential to impact special status wildlife species and contribute to cumulative impacts. The Proposed Project would not have cumulatively considerable biological resources impacts.

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Geology and Soils

The Proposed Project and other projects considered in this cumulative impact analysis would be subject to conformance with applicable building codes and standards as well as erosion control requirements intended to reduce the potential for geology and soils impacts to occur. The nature and type of these projects does not have the potential to magnify the potential for geology and soils impacts by increasing the potential for fault rupture, strong seismic ground shaking, seismic-related ground failure, liquefaction, landslides, expansive soils, unstable soils or erosion. The Proposed Project would not have cumulatively considerable geology and soils impacts.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions and a specific project's contribution to potential climate change is a cumulative issue by nature. As shown in table 3.7-32, there is an ~~et de~~ increase of GHG emissions when comparing the potential of GHG emissions of the Proposed Project with historical GHG emissions from the existing equipment. **However, the net increase in GHG emissions from the Project would be below the 10,000 metric tons/year threshold of significance.** The climate change impact of GHG emissions from the Proposed Project would therefore be less than significant on a project-specific and cumulative scale. The Proposed Project would not have cumulatively considerable greenhouse gas emissions impacts.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

There would be a temporary increase in the transport, use, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials during construction of the Proposed Project. These materials are common to the construction and industrial trade and are the subject of compliance with regulations, including the California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 22, 23, 26, & 27, 29 CFR 1910.119, California Fire Codes CFR Title 24 and City of Glendale Fire Department Health and Safety code. Transport, use, and disposal of hazardous materials during the operation phase of the Proposed Project would be limited to aqueous ammonia used in the refrigerant chiller system and waste oil generated during routine facility operation. The Proposed Project would utilize the existing LFG collection system designed to eliminate/reduce LFG off site migration and surface migration from landfill operations. By combusting the LFG at the source, the Proposed Project would result in abandoning the existing five-mile-long LFG pipeline between the SCLF and Grayson Power Plant. The existing LFG pipeline would be filled with inert nitrogen gas and plugged.

There are no nearby uses which, when considered with the Proposed Project and others included in this analysis that increase any hazard risks on site or to areas surrounding the site. The Proposed Project would not have cumulatively considerable hazards and hazardous materials impacts.

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Hydrology and Water Quality

During construction, the Proposed Project would be required to comply with the NPDES General GCP as well as prepare a SWPPP that requires the incorporation of BMPs to control sedimentation, erosion, and hazardous materials contamination of runoff during construction. The Proposed Project would comply with the waste discharge prohibitions and water quality objectives established by the RWQCB that are incorporated into the project as design features. As such, it is not anticipated that the Proposed Project would violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. The Proposed Project includes permanent drainage structures that will direct all site drainage into the existing landfill drainage system. The Proposed Project would not have cumulatively considerable hydrology and water quality impacts.

Land Use

The Proposed Project is located within the SCLF and a primarily pre-disturbed area currently used for LFG collection. The Proposed Project is a conditionally permitted se and would require a CUP. The Proposed Project will not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy or regulation. The Proposed Project would not have cumulatively considerable land use impacts.

Noise

The Proposed Project and the proposed Grayson Repowering Project are spatially separated such that they would not have the potential to contribute to cumulative noise impacts. There could be an overlap of noise sources from the Proposed Project, the proposed Scholl Canyon Landfill Expansion Project and the digester project (if located at the landfill) that could cumulatively affect a nearby sensitive receptor.

The primary noise related impact from the landfill expansion project would result from an increase in vehicle travel and impacts to sensitive receptors within an estimated 129 feet of the centerline of Scholl Canyon Road between Highway 134 and the Eagle Rock Substation. Operating at full capacity, the landfill would generate 3,490 vehicle trips per day (Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, 2014). The Proposed Project would generate up to 23 and six vehicle trips per day during construction and operation, respectively. The digester project, if located at the Scholl Canyon Landfill would likely include vehicle traffic related noise that already exists on roadways within and adjacent to the landfill as green waste is currently transported to the landfill and used for cover. The Proposed Project would have a minor increase in traffic compared to the Project and would therefore not produce a substantial contribution of traffic related noise impacts to sensitive receptors. The power generating facility is located approximately 4,000 feet northwest of these receptors and is not expected to have a substantial contribution to potential cumulative impacts. The Proposed Project would not have cumulatively considerable noise impacts.

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Transportation and Traffic

The Proposed Project includes a minor increase in operation phase traffic compared to that which currently exists and does not have the potential to contribute to a cumulatively considerable long-term impact. Although construction of the Proposed Project would increase the volume of traffic present in the existing roadway network, the increase will not cause the LOS to exceed the thresholds for significant impacts. The LOS at ramps or intersections will not change as a result of the traffic associated with the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project and the proposed Grayson Repowering Project would utilize different roadways and therefore would not have the potential to contribute to potential cumulative impacts. The digester project, if located at the Scholl Canyon Landfill would likely include vehicle traffic that already exists on roadways within and adjacent to the landfill as green waste is currently transported to the landfill and used for cover. In the event construction of the Proposed Project overlaps with implementation of the proposed Scholl Canyon Landfill Expansion Project, there would be an incremental cumulative increase in vehicle traffic at the intersections of Figueroa Street and Highway 134 ramps. However, the proposed Scholl Canyon Landfill Expansion Project includes mitigation for improvements to these potentially affected intersections that would substantially improve levels of service. Considering the limited short-term contribution of Proposed Project traffic compared to the potential long-term increase and mitigation improvements associated with the landfill expansion project, the Proposed Project would not result in cumulatively considerable transportation and traffic impacts.

Utilities and Service Systems

The Proposed Project would comply with the waste discharge prohibitions and water quality objectives established by the Los Angeles RWCQB that will be incorporated into the Project as a project design feature. The Proposed Project would not require the expansion or construction of wastewater treatment facilities. No new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities would be required. The water demand of the Proposed Project is very small and within the City's capacity to supply. The Proposed Project involves capturing and combusting LFG to generate electricity and does not include a component with the potential to contribute to a cumulatively considerable utilities and service systems impact. Therefore, the Proposed Project would not result in cumulatively considerable utilities and service systems impacts.

- c. *Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?*

Based on the results of the Initial Study (Section 3.0), the Proposed Project is not expected to have environmental effects, which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.