

Permitting & Assistance Branch Staff Report

New Full Solid Waste Facilities Permit for
Azusa Transfer and Material Recovery Facility

SWIS No. 19-AA-1127

August 6, 2013

Background Information, Analysis, and Findings:

This report was developed in response to the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, Solid Waste Management Program, Local Enforcement Agency's (LEA) request for the Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (Department) concurrence on the issuance of a proposed new Solid Waste Facilities Permit (SWFP) for Azusa Transfer and Material Recovery Facility located in the City of Azusa, and owned and operated by Azusa Land Reclamation, Inc. A copy of the proposed permit is attached. This report contains Permitting & Assistance Branch staff's analysis, findings, and recommendations.

The proposed permit was initially received on August 1, 2013. Action must be taken on this permit no later than September 30, 2013. If no action is taken by September 30, 2013 the Department will be deemed to have concurred with the issuance of the proposed new SWFP.

Proposed Project:

The following are the key design parameters of the proposed project:

	Proposed SWFP
Facility Name	Azusa Transfer and Material Recovery Facility
Operator/Owner	Azusa Land Reclamation, Inc.
Proposed Hours/Days of Operation	24 hours a day, 7 days a week (See Page 6, C.1 for specification)
Proposed Permitted Maximum Tonnage	Total – 3,800 tons per day (TPD) Municipal Solid Waste – 2,500 TPD Recyclables – 800 TPD Greenwaste – 500 TPD
Proposed Permitted Area	6.0 Acres
Design Capacity	3,800 TPD

Key Issues:

The proposed new SWFP will allow for the following:

1. The facility will operate as a Large Volume Transfer/Processing Facility.
2. The facility will operate within the permitted facility boundary of the Azusa Land Reclamation Company Landfill, Facility No. 19-AA-0013, with a portion of the facility boundary located on land previously used for landfilling (Zone 1).

Background:

The proposed new SWFP will allow for the operation of a new Large Volume Transfer/Processing Facility located in the City of Azusa (County of Los Angeles). The facility will receive, process, and transfer up to 3,800 tons per day of solid waste, which include 2,500

tons per day of municipal solid waste, 800 tons per day of recyclable material (source separated and non-source separated), and 500 tons per day of green waste. Access to the facility will be off West Gladstone Street; however, the entrance to the facility will be separate from the landfill's entrance (south of the landfill's entrance gate and scale house). The tonnage received at this facility will be separate from the permitted tonnage received at the landfill (i.e., not count toward the permitted landfill tonnage).

Findings:

Staff recommends concurrence in the issuance of the proposed new SWFP. All of the required submittals and findings required by Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations (27 CCR), Section 21685, have been provided and made. Staff has determined that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements have been met to support concurrence. The findings that are required to be made by the Department when reaching a determination are summarized in the following table. The documents on which staff's findings are based have been provided to the Branch Chief with this Staff Report and are permanently maintained by the Waste Permitting, Compliance, and Mitigation Division.

27 CCR Sections	Findings	
21685(b)(1) LEA Certified Complete and Correct Report of Facility Information	The LEA provided the required certification in their permit submittal letter dated August 1, 2013.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable
21685(b)(3) Solid Waste Facility Permit	Staff received a proposed Solid Waste Facilities Permit on August 1, 2013.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable
21685 (b)(4)(A) Consistency with Public Resources Code 50001	The LEA in their permit submittal package received on August 1, 2013, provided a finding that the facility is consistent with PRC 50001. Waste Evaluation & Enforcement Branch (WEEB) staff in the Jurisdiction Product & Compliance Unit found the facility is identified in the Nondisposal Facility Element, as described in their memorandum dated July 30, 2013.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable
21685(b)(8) Operations Consistent with State Minimum Standards	Permitting & Assistance Branch staff determined that the design and operations described in the submitted Transfer Processing Report, dated May 8, 2013, will allow the proposed facility to comply with State Minimum Standards.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable
21685(b)(9) LEA CEQA Finding	The LEA provided a finding in their permit submittal package received on August 1, 2013, that the proposed permit is consistent with and supported by the existing CEQA documentation. See Environmental Analysis information below for details.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable
21650(g)(5) Public Notice and/or Meeting, Comments	A Public Informational Meeting was held by the LEA on July 3, 2013. Written comments were received by LEA staff. See Public Comments section below for details.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable

27 CCR Sections	Findings	
CEQA Determination to Support Responsible Agency's Findings	The Department is a responsible agency under CEQA with respect to this project. Permitting and Assistance Branch staff has determined that the CEQA record can be used to support the Branch Chief's action on the proposed new SWFP.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acceptable <input type="checkbox"/> Unacceptable

Compliance History:

Permitting & Assistance Branch has determined that the design and operations described in the submitted Transfer Processing Report will allow the proposed facility to comply with State Minimum Standards.

Environmental Analysis:

Under California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Department must consider, and avoid or substantially lessen where possible, any potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed new SWFP before the Department concurs in it. In this case, the Department is a Responsible Agency under CEQA and must utilize the environmental document prepared by the City of Azusa, Community Development Department, acting as Lead Agency, absent changes in the project or the circumstances under which it will be carried out that justify the preparation of additional environmental documents and absent significant new information about the project, its impacts and the mitigation measures imposed on it.

The proposed project that will be authorized by the issuance of the proposed permit include:

1. The construction of a 125,000 square feet Material Recovery Facility, scale house, and transfer station (MRF/TS) within the permitted boundary of the Azusa Land Reclamation, Inc. Landfill, Facility No. 19-AA-0013.
2. The facility will consist of a tiered structure ranging from 30 to 57 feet, a single-story bale storage building with a truck dock, and paved driveways with surface parking areas.
3. The facility is designed to receive, process, and transfer up to 3,800 tons per day of solid waste, which include 2,500 tons per day of municipal solid waste, 800 tons per day of recyclable materials (source separated and non-source separated), and 500 tons per day of green waste.
4. The facility will operate 24 hours per day, seven days a week.
5. The peak daily vehicle count, converted to passenger car equivalent, which was analyzed for the project is 4,294 total round trips, including employee and landscaping roundtrips. There is no permitted traffic volume in the SWFP since the limitation is based upon the tons per day throughput.

The proposed project is supported by the following environmental document.

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR), dated March 2011, State Clearinghouse No. 2010081010, was circulated for a 45 day comment period from March 24, 2011 to May 9, 2011. The project analysis concluded that the environmental impacts caused by the project would have a significant effect on the environment even after mitigation measures were made on the project. The Final EIR, together with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program and the Statement of Overriding of Considerations, was certified by the Lead Agency on July 5, 2011.

The Lead Agency determined that the project benefits outweigh the adverse environmental impacts. The benefits from the project will include:

1. The Project will allow for efficient transfer and disposal of municipal solid waste in the San Gabriel Valley, thereby reducing the number of vehicle miles currently traveled by disposal trucks and residents to other facilities.
2. The Project enables Los Angeles County and the cities within the County to more efficiently achieve current local and state-mandated diversion goals, thereby facilitating compliance with the Integrated Waste Management Act and corresponding materials to other more distant sites.
3. The Project, given its proximity to solid waste generators, result in relatively low economic costs to transport recyclables and refuse to the site, when compared to transporting materials to other more distant sites.
4. The Project will reduce and/or eliminate the distance otherwise required for San Gabriel Valley disposal trucks to travel to reach landfill and processing centers capable of handling existing volumes of municipal solid waste, thereby reducing regional air emissions and greenhouse gas emission from fewer truck trips that would otherwise occur irrespective of the Project and thereby providing environmental benefits in the form of fewer regional air emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, wear and tear on vehicles and roads.
5. The Project will help meet anticipated demand for green waste processing using a new state-of-the-art facility following closure of the Puente Hills Landfill in October 2013.
6. The Project would expand the San Gabriel Valley's ability to process green and wood waste in order to promote increased recycling of such materials consistent with City, Los Angeles County, and State goals.
7. The Project will increase the number of temporary construction jobs within the City and would create 69 new permanent jobs, with full benefits, for long term operation of the MRF/TS. These positions will not be created if the Project is not approved.
8. The Project will utilize state-of-the-art technology, will be LEED certified, and will thus minimize environmental impacts on surrounding land uses.
9. The Project would contribute over \$5 million annually to the local economy through a roughly \$3.8 million dollar payroll (69 new full-time jobs at approximately \$55-60k per year average), and through the purchases of goods and services from local vendors. Fees and property taxes paid and collected by Waste Management would be a little over \$2 million a year when operating at full capacity to the City's General Fund (e.g. \$2 million in host fees, and approximately \$50,000 in property taxes) as provided in the Project Development Agreement.

Because all of the project's impacts cannot be avoided or substantially reduced, before concurring on the issuance of the proposed permit, the Department must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations that indicates its reasons for overriding the adverse environmental

effects caused by the proposed project. It is Department staff's recommendation that the Department adopt as its own the Statement of Overriding Considerations as adopted by LEA to the extent the unavoidable significant environmental effects of the Project identified in the Statement of Overriding Considerations relate to environmental effects caused by the Department's exercise of its Statutory Authority.

Department staff further recommends the Final EIR, with all other CEQA documents adopted by the LEA, and with the inclusion of the Statement of Overriding Considerations, is adequate for the Branch Chief's environmental evaluation of the proposed project for those project activities which are within the Department's expertise and/or powers, or which are required to be carried out or approved by the Department.

The LEA has provided a finding that the proposed new SWFP is consistent with and supported by the cited environmental document.

Staff recommends that the Department, acting as a Responsible Agency under CEQA, utilize the Final EIR as prepared by the Lead Agency in that there are no grounds under CEQA for the Department to prepare a subsequent or supplemental environmental document or assume the role of Lead Agency for its consideration of the proposed new SWFP.

The administrative record for the decision to be made by the Department includes the administrative record before the LEA, the proposed new SWFP and all of its components and supporting documentation, this staff report, the EIR adopted by the Lead Agency, and other documents and materials utilized by the Department in reaching its decision on concurrence in, or objection to, the proposed new SWFP. The custodian of the Department's administrative record is Dona Sturgess, Legal Office, Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, P.O. Box 4025, Sacramento, CA 95812-4025.

Public Comments:

The project document availability and associated meetings were noticed consistent with the SWFP requirements. The LEA held a public informational meeting on July 3, 2013, at the Azusa Civic Auditorium located at 213 East Foothill Boulevard, Azusa. Five members of the public were in attendance and provided comments and questions regarding traffic congestion, requirements pertaining to the California Air Resources Board, and road modification at the Irwindale Avenue/Gladstone Avenue intersection. The operator provided responses by providing information from the EIR cited above. One public member submitted a written comment describing his reasons for support of the project.