



# Notice of Availability of the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program

<b>Lead Agency   Location:</b>	<b>San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District 380 East Vanderbilt Way San Bernardino, CA 92408</b>
<b>Meeting Date   Time:</b>	<b>May 15, 2019   4:00 p.m.</b>
<b>To:</b>	<b>Responsible and Trustee Agencies and Interested Parties</b>
<b>Review Period:</b>	<b>April 19, 2019 through June 3, 2019</b>

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**Project Description:** San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (Valley District) as the Lead Agency has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Upper Santa Ana River Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program (proposed project) in Riverside County. The proposed project has two components that would be implemented by Valley District: the four Santa Ana River tributaries restoration (Tributaries Restoration Project) and a Mitigation Reserve Program. The Tributaries Restoration Project would construct and maintain four tributary restoration sites in Riverside County. The four restoration sites are: Anza Creek, Old Ranch Creek, Lower Hole Creek, and Hidden Valley Creek. The proposed Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program Phase I would improve the ecological condition of habitat for Santa Ana sucker and jurisdictional aquatic resources by restoring existing channels, creating new channels, restoring the associated floodplain, enhancing the existing riparian and floodplain habitats, and controlling nonnative invasive species. The proposed Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program Phase I would also provide support for the existing local community environmental education and recreational opportunities.

The Mitigation Reserve Program would account for and track the development of mitigation value “credits” and application of those values to future project permit requirements. The purpose of the Mitigation Reserve Program is to develop a common understanding and legal framework for the conservation/mitigation values created by Valley District through the restoration activities. Phase I of the Mitigation Reserve Program would create conservation and mitigation credits based on the ecological values established within the four tributaries footprints and the native riparian buffer zone, which currently have funding and would be constructed by 2021 at each of the project sites. There is an opportunity to expand the Mitigation Reserve Program, referred to as “Expanded Mitigation Reserve Program Phase II,” by implementing additional restoration activities beyond the footprint of this proposed project (tributaries and 100-foot native riparian buffer) to implement additional restoration opportunities and develop more mitigation credit reserves. However, no construction funding is currently secured for the expanded restoration opportunities and no timeline has been set at this time for implementing additional restoration associated with Mitigation Reserve Program Phase II. The Expanded Mitigation Reserve Program Phase II is still in the conceptual stage of development for individual expanded restoration opportunities at each of the sites, and is being considered for implementation following completion of the Tributaries Restoration Project and Mitigation Reserve Program Phase I.

The purpose of the Draft EIR process is to provide stakeholders, agencies, and the public with an opportunity to consider the proposed project. The Draft EIR describes the project objectives, analyzes the potential impacts associated with the construction and operation of the proposed project, and identifies potential measures to minimize, avoid, or mitigate significant adverse effects on environmental resources.

**Public Meeting:** One public meeting will be held to receive comments regarding the content of the Draft EIR. The public meetings will include a brief presentation to provide an overview of the proposed project and the CEQA process. Written

comment forms will be supplied for those who wish to submit comments in writing at the public meeting. Written comments may also be submitted anytime during the Draft EIR review period. The public meeting will be held as follows:

**Wednesday, May 15, 2019**

4:00 p.m.

San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
380 E. Vanderbilt Way, San Bernardino, CA 92408

**Availability of the Draft EIR:** Copies of the Draft EIR will be available for review at the Valley District Headquarters Building (380 E. Vanderbilt Way, San Bernardino, CA 92408) during regular business hours starting Thursday, April 18, 2019. The EIR will be circulated for a 45-day period for public review, beginning April 19, 2019, and ending on June 3, 2019. Copies of the Draft EIR will also be available at the following libraries:

Arlanza Public Library  
267 Philbin Ave  
Riverside, CA 92503

Louis Robidoux Library  
5840 Mission Boulevard  
Jurupa Valley, CA 92509

**Agency and Public Comments:** In accordance with the time limits mandated by CEQA, comments on the Draft EIR must be received by Valley District no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 3, 2019. Please submit written comments to:

*Heather Dyer, Water Resources Project Manager  
San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
380 East Vanderbilt Way, San Bernardino, CA 92408  
Phone: (909) 387-9256; Fax: (909) 387-9247*

**By Email:** [uppersarrestoration@icf.com](mailto:uppersarrestoration@icf.com)

**The EIR can be viewed online at:** <http://www.sbvwmwd.com/Upper-SAR-Restoration>

**For more information, please contact:**

*Heather Dyer, Water Resources Project Manager  
San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District  
(909) 387-9256*