

# Notice of Document Availability

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**Project Title:** Lower Owens River Project (LORP)

**Lead Agency:** City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP)

**Document Name:** Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (Draft SEIR)

**SEIR Document Availability:** The Draft SEIR is available for public review on LADWP website (<http://www.ladwp.com>) and at the following local libraries: Main Library, 168 North Edwards Street, Independence, (760) 878-0260; Bishop Branch, 210 Academy Avenue, Bishop, (760) 873-5115; Lone Pine Branch, 145 West Bush Street, Lone Pine, (760) 876-5031; and Big Pine Branch, 201 North Main Street, Big Pine, (760) 938-2420. The Draft SEIR and other documents related to the LORP are also available for review at LADWP offices in Bishop (see contact information below).

**Public Review Period:** Written comments on the Draft SEIR may be submitted from **December 23, 2005** through **February 6, 2006**. Please indicate a contact person in your response and send your response to the address below:

Mr. Clarence Martin  
City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power  
300 Mandich Street  
Bishop, California 93514  
Phone: (760) 872-1104 Fax: (760) 873-0266

**Background:** A Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report has been prepared by LADWP, the Lead Agency for the LORP under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Draft SEIR is supplemental to the Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the LORP, which was completed and published by LADWP in June 2004. The City of Los Angeles Board of Water and Power Commissioners certified the Final EIR and adopted the project in July 2004. In October 2004, a lawsuit was filed by the Sierra Club challenging the adequacy of the Final EIR with respect to analysis of project impacts on an area described as the "brine pool transition area." As a result of the lawsuit, in July 2005, a stipulated judgment was entered in Inyo County Superior Court (Case Number S1CVPT04-37217, Sierra Club v. City of Los Angeles et al., July 25, 2005). The stipulated judgement requires LADWP to:

- Prepare and circulate for public review and comment a focused environmental analysis that addresses the impacts of the LORP to the "brine pool transition area."
- Proceed with construction of the LORP-related facilities (including the pump station) and implementation of the LORP, but not begin operation of the pump station pending consideration and certification of the focused environmental analysis.

The Draft SEIR documents the focused environmental analysis required by the July 2005 judgement.

**Project Location:** The LORP area is in the Owens Valley in the eastern Sierra Nevada (Inyo County, California). The area includes approximately 62-river miles of the Lower Owens River and adjacent areas. The northern boundary of the LORP area is the River Intake structure, and the southern boundary is the Owens River Delta (Delta). The project area encompasses much of the valley floor east of the Los Angeles Aqueduct and west of the Inyo Mountains. The specific location of interest for the Draft SEIR is the Owens Lake "brine pool transition area." The brine pool transition area is the area of the Owens Lake bed located south of the vegetated portions of the Delta, including the northeastern portion of the brine pool that is influenced by outflows from the Delta.

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Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Lower Owens River Project

**Project Description:** The proposed project description for the LORP has not changed from that described in the Final EIR. LORP is a large-scale habitat restoration project that will be implemented through a joint effort by LADWP and Inyo County. The overall objective of the LORP is to establish/enhance and maintain healthy, functioning ecosystems in the four geographic areas of the LORP for the benefit of biodiversity and threatened and endangered species, while providing for the continuation of sustainable uses such as recreation, livestock grazing, agriculture, and other activities.

LORP includes: restoration of the Lower Owens River by providing flows to the river to enhance fish, wetland, and riparian habitats; creation of new wetlands through seasonal flooding at the Blackrock Waterfowl Habitat Area; release of flows to the Delta Habitat Area to maintain and enhance wetlands; and modification of grazing practices on LADWP leases adjacent to the river. A detailed description of the proposed project is provided in the Final EIR dated June 23, 2004, which can be reviewed at the following locations: LADWP offices in Bishop (see contact information above); LADWP offices in Los Angeles (111 North Hope Street, Room 1468, Los Angeles, California 90012); and on the LADWP website at: <http://ladwp.com/ladwp/cms/ladwp005749.jsp>.

**Environmental Effects:** The Draft SEIR addresses the environmental impacts of the LORP on the brine pool transition area as required by the July 2005 judgement. The Draft SEIR focuses on evaluation of impacts on the brine pool transition area, and includes descriptions of the existing biological resources and hydrologic conditions, descriptions of the change in hydrologic and habitat conditions expected under LORP, and analysis of potential impacts on habitats and wildlife, particularly birds. No significant impacts on the brine pool transition area were identified. Therefore, no new mitigation is required beyond measures identified in the Final EIR.

The project is not located on a hazardous waste site listed under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

  
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Signature

12/19/05  
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Date

Gene L. Coufal  
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Printed Name

Manager, Los Angeles Aqueduct Business Group  
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Title