

**A RESOLUTION
OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF THE VENTURA COUNTY WATERSHED PROTECTION DISTRICT
ADOPTING A STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE
ADVERSE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH CERTIFICATION OF
THE FINAL EIS/EIR FOR THE MATILIJA DAM ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION
FEASIBILITY STUDY AND THE APPROVAL OF THE
MATILIJA DAM ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROJECT**

WHEREAS, the Board reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final Environmental Impact Statement/ Environmental Impact Report (Final EIS/EIR) for the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Feasibility Study and certified said Final EIS/EIR on (December 14, 2004); and

WHEREAS, on (December 14, 2004), the Board approved the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project (Approved Project); and

NOW, THEREFORE, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE VENTURA COUNTY WATERSHED PROTECTION DISTRICT HEREBY RESOLVES THAT:

1. The Board finds that the Approved Project as described in the Final EIS/EIR could have significant biological, aesthetic, air quality, noise, transportation, and recreation effects on the environment, which cannot be reduced to less than significant levels despite imposing all feasible mitigation measures, as identified in the Final EIS/EIR.
2. The Board finds that the Approved Project, with the mitigation measures and project conditions incorporated into its approval, implements all feasible mitigation measures identified in the Final EIS/EIR, and the project with the mitigation measures incorporated by the Board would eliminate or substantially lessen all the mitigable significant effects on the environment described in the Final EIS/EIR; and
3. The Board finds that there are overriding considerations which outweigh and make acceptable the unavoidable significant biological, aesthetic, air quality, noise, transportation, and recreation impacts associated with the Approved Project, including the following beneficial effects:

Beneficial Effects on Biological Resources

- Native revegetation of the appropriate project impact areas would ultimately restore quality upland and riparian habitat and eventually lead to recruitment of native wildlife species along Matilija Creek. The benefits that would occur over time in this area, including the removal of non-native plant and animal species and a return to natural stream dynamics, would

likely offset any initial adverse impacts that would occur during dam removal.

- The project would actively remove and control invasive exotic plants and animals from the aquatic and riparian ecosystems of the study area, which would result in beneficial impacts to native species in Matilija Creek and the Ventura River.
- If left in place, Matilija Dam would remain a substantial barrier to wildlife movement for a number of sensitive species. Following dam removal and restoration activities, the canyon and creek in the vicinity of the Matilija Dam and reservoir would eventually be restored to a natural condition, and wildlife movement through the area would resume resulting in a net benefit to wildlife movement. As such, there would be no long-term loss or disruption of wildlife movement corridors. In fact, wildlife movement through the canyon would increase due to the removal of the barrier represented by Matilija Dam, especially for fish and other aquatic species that cannot currently move past the dam. These beneficial impacts would be substantial and more than outweigh the temporary impacts resulting from construction.
- The federally listed endangered steelhead trout would be able to migrate upstream into the upper reaches of Matilija Creek and into historical habitat. In addition, the removal of Matilija Dam would provide fish populations that have been landlocked since the construction of the dam access to the Pacific Ocean and allow a potential return to anadromy.
- As a result of dam removal and stream restoration, approximately 9,500 linear feet of streambed and bank along Matilija Creek would be restored following the alignment of the 1947 "pre-dam" condition. The stream would be 100 feet wide and provide 22 acres of stream, in addition to 83 acres of restored riparian habitat on the banks (Final EIS/EIR Section 5.3). Restored steelhead habitat would include the 22 acres of riverine plus 6.5 acres of lower bank on one side of the new channel between the years 0 and 5 following the deconstruction of the dam. By year 20, natural processes would remove the temporary soil revetment and total steelhead habitat would increase to approximately 38 acres.

Beneficial Effects on Aesthetics:

- The improvement to the scenic value of Matilija Canyon would be a considerable aesthetic benefit to the area, especially considering that the lake will continue to decrease in size under current conditions.
- The project would allow for the enhancement of unique and historically significant landmarks in the area, such as Hanging Rock.

Beneficial Effects on Recreation:

- The project would improve the Matilija Canyon environment and develop recreational opportunities along Matilija Creek and the downstream Ventura River system.

Additional Beneficial Effects:

- Removal of the Matilija Dam would restore the natural sediment transport regime of Matilija Creek and the Ventura River, thereby improving downstream coastal beach sand replenishment, and replenishment of sediment to scoured areas in the Ventura River.
- The Approved Project would beneficially impact the local economy for the two-year duration of the project by employing local workers, and with use of native plant nurseries for vegetation restoration materials.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board of Supervisors of the Ventura County Watershed Protection District hereby adopts this Resolution as its Statement of Overriding Considerations for its decision to approve the Matilija Dam Ecosystem Restoration Project in that the beneficial effects listed herein outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects described in the Final EIS/EIR.

Adopted on December 14, 2004.



Chair, Board of Supervisors
Ventura County Watershed Protection District

ATTEST:

JOHN F. JOHNSTON
Clerk of the District Board
Ventura County Watershed Protection District
State of California

By
Deputy Clerk of the Board

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