California
WATER COMMISSION

Water Storage Investment Program Concept Paper

Montebello Forebay Injection Wells

Contact Information

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Agency/Organization Name: Water Replenishment District of Southern California (WRD)	
Agency Type (select one):	☒ Public Agency ☐ Nonprofit Organization ☐ Public Utility ☐ Tribe ☐ Mutual Water Company ☐ Local Joint Powers Authority ☐ Other:

Project Information

Project Name: Montebello Forebay Injection Wells	
Project Type:	☐ CALFED Surface Storage ☒ Groundwater Storage ☐ Groundwater Contamination Prevention or Remediation ☒ Conjunctive Use ☐ Reservoir Reoperation ☐ Local Surface Storage ☐ Regional Surface Storage ☐Other:
Estimated Project Cost: $452,000,000	
Estimated WSIP Funding Request: $226,000,000	

Please describe your project, including location, water source, facilities, and operations:

The Central and West Coast groundwater basins are two of the most heavily utilized urban basins in California and provide 40% of the water supply for 4 million residents,10 percent of the State's population, within 43 cities. The Water Replenishment District (WRD) manages these adjudicated basins. Recharge for replenishment of the Central groundwater basin is performed in the Montebello Forebay area. To increase replenishment of recycled water, WRD's Groundwater Basin Master Plan (GBMP) includes additional replenishment via injection at new wells in the Montebello Forebay. This project may require diversions to the existing sewage collection system in the vicinity of the Whittier Narrows Water Reclamation Plant (WRP). With the sewer diversions, the wastewater flow that is currently treated at JWPCP and discharged via LACSD's existing ocean outfall off the coast of Palos Verdes would instead be recharged at the Montebello Forebay. New advanced water treatment (AWT) facilities will be installed at the Montebello Forebay and Los Coyotes WRP to produce approximately 18,190 acre-feet of advanced-treated water. This water will then be conveyed and injected into the Montebello Forebay through new pipelines and up to 17 new injection wells.

It should be noted that since the development of the GBMP, MWD has initiated studies to develop recycled water from the JWPCP and convey to areas of the Central Basin. If this project proceeds, the MWD recycled water would serve as an alternative source for the injection described above.

Per Water Code section 79753, the Commission may only fund the public benefits of water storage projects. Further, ecosystem improvements must make up 50% of the funded public benefits (Water Code section 79756(b)). What public benefits does your project provide? (select all that apply):

☒ Ecosystem Improvements ☒ Water Quality Improvements ☐ Flood Control
☒ Emergency Response ☐ Recreation

Please describe the magnitude of the public benefits and how the project will be operated to provide the public benefits:

Ecosystem Improvements: The project will provide a public benefit by reducing the amount of water imported to Southern California from the Bay-Delta. This will provide an ecosystem benefit by changing the amount and timing of water diversions from the Bay-Delta. As a result, the project will contribute to improvements in flow conditions, temperature, and other ecosystem benefits that contribute to the restoration of native fish and wildlife in aquatic and terrestrial habitats.

Emergency Response: In addition to providing the water supply reliability needed to directly respond to a variety of emergency situations, the project will contribute to emergency water supplies and flows for dilution and salinity repulsion following a natural disaster or act of terrorism.

Water Quality Improvements: The project provides water quality benefits in two ways. First, it will reduce water imports, keeping more water in Delta waterways. This will contribute to fishery protection, fish and wildlife conservation, preservation of waterways in their natural state, and recreation. Second, the project will clean up and restore groundwater resources in a heavily urbanized basin.
Also, this project would offset 18,190 acre-feet per year of imported water.

Water Code section 79752 requires that funded projects provide measurable improvements to the Delta ecosystem or to the tributaries of the Delta. Please describe how your project provides ecosystem improvements in the Delta or tributaries to the Delta:
As a result of this project and other related management actions, the WRD will cease to import water from the State Water Project. Accordingly, the amount of water that will remain in the Delta, which would have otherwise been diverted to Southern California, is up to 18,190 acre-feet per year. The project will provide ecosystem improvements in the Delta and its tributaries by reducing the amount of water taken from the Delta, thereby increasing flows in rivers and streams. The result of increased flow includes major ecosystem improvements such as cooler water temperatures and restoration of historic natural hydrographs to increase fish abundance, distribution, and overall viability.

Water Code sections 79755 and 79757 require the Commission to make a finding that a project will advance the long-term objectives of restoring ecological health and improving water management for beneficial uses in the Delta prior to allocating funding for a project. Please describe how your project could help advance the long-term objectives of restoring ecological health and improving water management for beneficial uses in the Delta:
This project is foundational to WRD's "Water Independence Now" (WIN) program, which aims to permanently eliminate the need to import water from the Bay-Delta by producing and storing a high-quality, locally sourced water supply. WRD will demonstrate this improved paradigm for managing water resources and, in this way, will lead by example. The projects WRD proposes provide lasting and long-term benefits in the Bay-Delta, as well as in Southern California.

Please describe any other benefits provided by your project, such as water supply reliability benefits, and the potential beneficiaries:

C5 – Local water quality improvement achieved through storm water capture and better basin management, improved local water supply reliability, and climate change adaptation. Beneficiaries include the population of the Central groundwater basin, of which a large portion are DAC's, and the local economy.

C6 – same as C5

C7 – C10 Local water quality improvement achieved through better basin management, improved local water supply reliability, and climate change adaptation. Beneficiaries include the population of the Central groundwater basin, of which a large portion are DAC's, and the local economy.