



Inyo County Water Department
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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Date: May 7, 2019

Project Title: Owens River Water Trail

CEQA Lead Agency: County of Inyo

The County of Inyo has completed the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) (State Clearinghouse No. 2018051049) for the Owens River Water Trail, which is summarized below. The Draft EIR has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as amended (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.), and the State CEQA Guidelines for Implementation of CEQA (California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Section 15000 et seq.).

Project Description: The County of Inyo (project applicant) is proposing to implement the Owens River Water Trail Project (ORWT or project) within the perimeter of the Lower Owens River floodplain from Lone Pine Narrow Gauge Road south to Highway 136, just east of Lone Pine, California. The project area is largely a natural setting and is owned by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. The site is not included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

Implementation of the Project would allow recreational access for non-motorized watercraft to an approximately 6.3-mile segment of the Owens River representing approximately 10 percent of the length of the newly rewatered, 62-mile Lower Owens River. The project would develop facilities for recreational users to enter and exit the river and allow unimpeded navigation for non-motorized watercraft, such as kayaks, stand-up paddle boards, and canoes. The project would involve removal of emergent vegetation and excavation within the river channel to remove occlusions. In addition, boat launch and take-out facilities that would provide limited amenities (i.e., vault restroom, wildlife resistant trash receptacles, signage) in addition to access to the river, would be developed. The County would provide ongoing maintenance of the water trail.

Anticipated Significant Environmental Effects: Based on the analyses contained in the Draft EIR, the project would result in potentially significant impacts to biological resources, cultural resources, paleontological resources, and hydrology and water quality. However, with the implementation of mitigation measures impacts would be reduced to a less than significant level.

Comment Period: The 45-day review period for this Draft EIR begins on May 8, 2019 and ends on June 21, 2019. During this comment period, comments may be submitted regarding the Draft EIR. Written comments and all questions should be addressed to Larry Freilich, Mitigation Manager, at Inyo County Water Department at P.O. Box 337, Independence, CA 93526; faxed to (760) 878-2552; or emailed to lfreilich@inyocounty.us. Inyo County is not required to respond to any comments received after this date.

Availability of Environmental Documentation: Copies of the Draft EIR for this Project are available for review at the Inyo County Water Department (135 S. Jackson Street, Independence), County Libraries, and the Inyo County Planning Department's website at: <https://www.inyocounty.us/EnvironmentalDocuments/EnvDocs.php>