

NOTICE OF PREPARATION ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

Date: August 15, 2018

To: State Clearinghouse, Responsible and Trustee Agencies, and Interested Individuals

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

Project Title: Mono County Ranch Lease Renewal Project

Lead Agency: The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

As the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) has determined that an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared for the proposed Mono County Ranch Lease Renewal Project (proposed Project). LADWP is soliciting input from members of the public, organizations, and government agencies on the scope and content of the information to be included and analyzed in the EIR. Agencies should comment on the elements of the environmental information that are relevant to their statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed Project.

The proposed project description, location, and potential environmental effects (to the extent known) are described in this Notice of Preparation. A public scoping meeting will be held to solicit input from interested parties on the scope and content of the EIR. A subsequent notice will be circulated with the date, time and location of the meeting.

Project Description

LADWP operates the existing Los Angeles Aqueduct (LAA) which transports water from Mono and Inyo Counties to Los Angeles. The City also leases City of Los Angeles-owned land to ten ranches in Mono County for various uses including cattle ranching. Those leases have expired and are now operating on holdover status. LADWP is proposing to enter into new Mono County leases for a potential 20 year term, which would constitute the proposed Project. The new Mono County leases would provide for LADWP to spread water deliveries to lands covered by the leases for operational purposes only, as determined by LADWP, at its sole discretion.

Project Location

The proposed leases are for City of Los Angeles-owned lands located in Mono County, California, on the eastern slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The area includes the communities of Sunny Slopes/Tom's Place, Aspen Springs, Crowley Lake/Hilton Creek, McGee Creek, and Long Valley. Pursuant to Section 15072 of the California Environmental Quality Act, the Project site is not on any of the lists enumerated under Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

Potential Environmental Effects

LADWP has historically spread water deliveries for agricultural irrigation purposes on approximately 6,100 acres on ranches for which LADWP proposes to enter new leases. The spreading of Eastern Sierra water for irrigation purposes on City of Los Angeles-owned land in Mono County was historically performed on an ad hoc basis, to accommodate LADWP's operational need to spread surplus water in the LAA system. LADWP anticipates that, under the proposed Project, it will spread water deliveries to lands covered by the leases less frequently, and in smaller average volumes, than in the past, due to enhancement/mitigation requirements and reductions in water deliveries that have greatly reduced the occurrences of surplus water in the LAA. The proposed Project will aid LADWP to restore natural hydrology in Mono County streams and maintain the best use of water as a resource for municipal purposes. LADWP's existing practice of spreading water for the sage grouse would not be affected by the proposed project.

Project level analyses for the proposed Project will focus on:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Recreation

The EIR will also evaluate a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed Project to feasibly reduce or avoid significant impacts.

Public and Agency Review

Interested parties may submit their comments on the content of the EIR to:

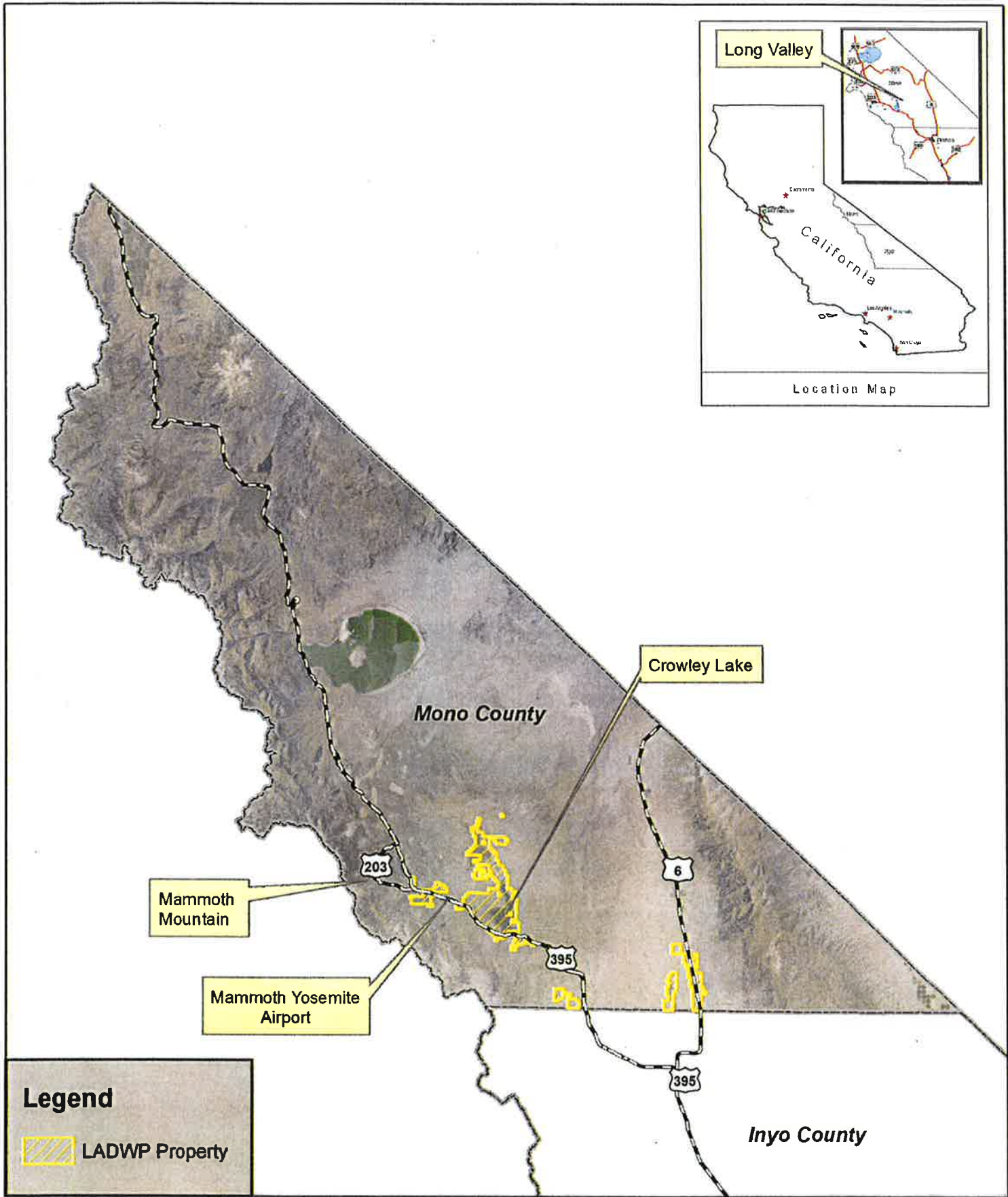
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power
Attention: Jane Hauptman
111 North Hope Street, Room 1044
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Due to the time limits mandated by State Law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 5:00 p.m. on **October 16, 2018**. Any questions regarding this notice should be directed to the contact listed above. Please provide a contact person from your agency.


In addition to the ongoing public and agency participation process, formal opportunities for public participation would be provided upon publication of the Draft EIR.

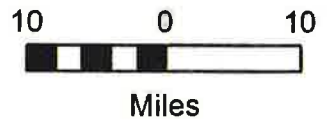
A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles C. Holloway" is written over a horizontal line.

Charles C. Holloway
Manager of Environmental Planning and Assessment



Legend

 LADWP Property



LADWP Property in Mono County Ranch Lease Renewal Project