



Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District TRF Power Resiliency Generator Project FEMA EHP Checklist Exhibit A

D. Project Coordination, Permits and Approvals

10. Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Migratory birds are protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which makes it unlawful to take, possess, buy, sell, purchase, or barter any migratory birds listed in 50 CFR Part 10. In addition, nesting birds are protected under the California Fish and Game Code (FGC) Sections 3503 and 3513. Loss of fertile eggs or migratory birds, or any activities resulting in migratory bird nest abandonment, would be an adverse effect. The project includes the installation of a generator and fuel tank at the existing HBMWD Turbidity Reduction Facility (TRF) and includes removal of minimal trees and shrubs. In addition, construction activities associated with the project could have a potentially significant effect on protected migratory birds. If construction occurs outside the bird nesting season, no further mitigation is necessary. If construction occurs between March 15 and August 15, the District shall have a qualified wildlife biologist conduct preconstruction surveys within the vicinity of the impact area, to check for nesting activity of native birds and to evaluate the site for special-status bird species. The biologist shall conduct a minimum of one preconstruction survey within the seven-day period prior to vegetation removal activities. If vegetation removal work lapses for seven days or longer during the nesting season, a qualified biologist shall conduct a supplemental avian survey before project work is reinitiated. If an active nest is found, the biologist will determine the extent of an appropriate construction-free buffer zone to be established around the nest and/or operational restrictions in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Buffer zones will be delineated with flagging and maintained until the nests have fledged or nesting activity has ceased. Buffer sizes would take into account factors such as (1) highway and other ambient noise levels, (2) distance from the nest to the highway and distance from the nest to the active construction area, (3) noise and human disturbance levels at the construction site at the time of the survey and the noise and disturbance expected during the construction activity; (4) distance and amount of vegetation or other screening between the construction site and the nest; and (5) sensitivity of individual nesting species and behaviors of the nesting birds.

E. Potential Environmental Impact:

Physical Characteristics of site or vicinity:

1. Some of the project and staging areas are on previously graded and cleared or asphalted areas. However, some grading, cut, and fill will be required to create a flattened access area for the new generator and fuel tank.
2. The project site consists of Lepoil-Candymountain complex, 2-15% slopes. This soil type is associated with redwood-Sitka spruce forest and is not considered a hydric soil.
3. The closest surface water body is the Mad River, which is approximately 1,000 feet from the project site.
5. Some grading work will occur, which would potentially alter drainage patterns of the site. BMPs will be installed during construction and will remain in place until the site is revegetated and stabilized. The project will be designed with the goal that no erosion or sedimentation result from any potential alterations of the existing drainage pattern.

6. Some grading and paving will occur, which will cause a slight increase in stormwater runoff. This will be analyzed in the environmental document for the project. It is anticipated that impacts will be less than significant; however, if mitigation measures are determined to be required, they will be included with the project design.

14. Seismic hazards exist in the area. One of the goals of the project is to improve the reliability and resilience of the municipal water infrastructure during power outages which can happen as a result of earthquakes.

17. Construction of the project would create temporary emissions of toxic air contaminants, primarily as a component of diesel emissions. Due to the variable nature of construction activity, the generation of toxic air contaminant emissions in most cases would be temporary, particularly considering the short amount of time such equipment is typically within an influential distance of sensitive receptors. Sensitive receptors in the project area include residences and agricultural facilities within one quarter mile of the six project locations. Concentrations of mobile source diesel PM emissions are typically reduced by 70 percent at a distance of approximately 500 feet (BAAQMD 2012). Due to the small footprint combined with the limited duration of proposed construction at any given time, and with air pollution prevention BMPs incorporated into the project (see Mitigation Measure 1), construction of the project would not cause a violation of air quality standards or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation. Operation of the generators will emit a mixture of three categories of air pollutants: common pollutants (carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter, nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compounds), hazardous air pollutants, and greenhouse gases. A permit from the North Coast Unified Air Quality Management District would be required due to the installation of generators before project implementation. It is not expected that operation of the generators would result in an increase in emission levels of regulated pollutants which would exceed *de minimis* standards.

Mitigation Measure 1: The project includes the following air quality control actions to reduce construction related emissions:

- All exposed surfaces (e.g. parking areas, staging areas, soil piles, graded areas and unpaved access roads) will be watered, as necessary, during windy periods when dust is generated.
- Idling times shall be minimized by shutting off equipment when idling for more than five minutes.
- All construction equipment will be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.

18. The proposed project would create temporary noise associated with grading, pouring concrete and installation of the generators. General equipment associated with construction, including a backhoe, grader, and concrete truck would produce approximately 85-88 decibels each at 50 feet away, which are individually comparable to a diesel truck driving 40 mph. The closest neighbor to any of the project sites is approximately 370 feet, with construction noise impacts potentially being bothersome but not significant. During operation of the generators, the noise level is expected to range from 58 to 75 decibels at 50 feet away depending on the type of generator. The closest residence to a project location is 370 feet; due to this distance, there will be a decrease of 16 decibels between 50 feet and 370 feet from the generator while in use.

19. There are approximately 15 residences within a ¼ mile of the project site that may experience increased ambient noise during construction. Construction, and the associated noise impacts, will be limited to weekdays, Monday-Friday, from 8 am to 5 pm.

Biological Characteristics

1. The staging area is completely contained on previously paved areas void of vegetation. The project site sits predominantly on a previously cleared and graded area of the HBMWD TRF bordered by mixed conifer vegetation.

2. It is possible that wildlife lives in the wild spaces surrounding the project sites. If it is determined that it is required, before construction a bird survey will be completed to ensure that any nesting birds are given proper clearance from construction activities.

3. The Project is located in the range of where endangered western lily (*Lilium occidentale*) could potentially exist. Surveys will be performed, and if special species are identified in the area, mitigation measures will be developed and incorporated into the design as appropriate.

7. The project area is located in the migratory birds Pacific Flyway and contains suitable nesting and foraging habitat for numerous species protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. The project includes the installation of a new generator and associated fuel tank predominantly within the existing fenced area of the the water turbidity reduction facility. Removal of a few trees and vegetation may take place as necessary.

A bird survey will be conducted during the NEPA process to identify any nest sites in the project area; if nests are identified, mitigation measures will be employed to offset impacts to affected migratory bird species. Mitigation Measure 2 details how impacts to nesting birds will be avoided during construction.

Mitigation Measure 2: The HBMWD shall implement the following measures to ensure no significant impacts to native migratory bird species:

- If construction occurs outside the bird nesting season, no further mitigation is necessary. If construction occurs between March 15 and August 15, the HBMWD shall have a qualified wildlife biologist conduct pre-construction surveys within the vicinity of the impact area, to check for nesting activity of native birds and to evaluate the site for special-status bird species. The biologist shall conduct a minimum of one preconstruction survey within the seven-day period prior to vegetation removal activities. If vegetation removal work lapses for seven days or longer during the nesting season, a qualified biologist shall conduct a supplemental avian survey before project work is reinitiated.
- If an active nest is found, the biologist will determine the extent of an appropriate construction-free buffer zone to be established around the nest and/or operational restrictions in consultation with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Buffer zones will be delineated with flagging and maintained until the nests have fledged or nesting activity has ceased. Buffer sizes would take into account factors such as (1) highway and other ambient noise levels, (2) distance from the nest to the highway and distance from the nest to the active construction area, (3) noise and human disturbance levels at the construction site at the time of the survey and the noise and disturbance expected during the construction activity; (4) distance and amount of vegetation or other screening between the construction site and the nest; and (5) sensitivity of individual nesting species and behaviors of the nesting birds.

Mitigation Measure 2 requires practicable avoidance and protection measures to nesting birds during construction, thereby reducing any potential impacts to nesting birds to a less than significant level.

Land Use and Socioeconomic Characteristics:

1. The majority of the community serviced by HBMWD is classified as a Disadvantaged or a Severely Disadvantaged Community. See the Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool Map in the Map tab. This project will protect these communities from loss of potable water and associated wastewater and fire protection services in the event of a major earthquake.

Historical and Cultural Characteristics

3. Minor excavation will be required for the generator and fuel tank foundation, and grading will occur to flatten out the generator and access area.
7. Section 106 compliance is anticipated to be very minor as there are no historic structures being altered.

Energy and Utilities

1. Gasoline and diesel will be used to provide the energy for the trucks and machinery used to meet the project needs for construction. The new generator will be operated on diesel.
2. The project site has access to electricity, water, and sanitary sewer.

Construction Activities:

1. –
 - a. As stated previously construction is anticipated to increase ambient noise and construction will generally be limited to weekdays, Monday-Friday, from 8 am to 5 pm, to minimize noise impacts. Work maybe required on an occasional Saturday or Sunday to finish a time sensitive item, but noise mitigation measures will be implemented if this is required.
 - b. The equipment exhaust during construction may degrade air quality slightly in the immediate vicinity, but this will be temporary and insignificant. The air quality is not anticipated to be an issue for nearby residences given the distance and amount of tree cover between the site and local residences. The air in Humboldt County is considered to be in “in attainment” of state and federal ambient air quality standards.