

Notice of Section 401 Application Reception

File Number: 362023-11

Project Name: Birch Creek Channel Maintenance

Received: 3/08/2023

Date Posted: 3/21/2023

End of 21 Day Public Comment Period: 4/11/2023

Project City: Unincorporated Community of Oak Glen

Project County: San Bernardino

Applicant Organization: San Bernardino Flood Control District

Applicant Name: Anthony Pham

Waterboard Staff: TBA

Brief Description of Project:

Project Description: Purpose and goal of the project is to provide continued flood protection to the community of Oak Glen. This permit is an extension of the emergency work which began following Sept 12 storms which resulted in significant damage to the Oak Glen community and loss of life in Forest Falls. A Local Emergency was proclaimed by the County Board of Supervisors on September 12, 2022 and has been extended. The Natural Resource Conservation Service (NCRS) has allocated federal emergency funds to restore and maintain Birch Creek channel in order to provide flood protection to the Oak Glen Community. The damage is the result of sediment and rock-laden flows that originated from the El Dorado burn area.

Project Activities: Project consists of the upfront removal of debris and sediment of approximately 25,000 CY from approximately 3,850 LF Birch Creek flood channel in the unincorporated area of Oak Glen and culvert repairs, and ongoing maintenance of the channel for the life of the permit. Using dozer equipment, long-reach excavators loaders and dump trucks, the facility will be returned to its as-built configuration of trapezoidal channel with 12' channel bottom and 1.5:1 slopes. Damaged culverts and appurtenant concrete structures will be replaced in-kind with the exception of additional rock reinforcement at the upstream end of the Oak Glen Road culvert (<.01 ac). Prior rock placed at that location has washed away. Approximately 24 LF of grouted rock is proposed to be placed to maintain structural integrity of culverts in future storm events. This additional rock is deemed essential by engineering staff at this location. Purpose of the project is to restore flood capacity and original flow conveyance through road culverts in order to protect life and property from future debris flows in the Oak Glen community and continue to maintain the channel for the life of the permit.

Heavy thunderstorms of September 11 - 12, 2022 in the 2020 El Dorado Fire burn area of the San Bernardino Mountains and subsequent storms resulted in significant debris and mud flows in Birch Creek channel. The channel was originally designed in 1965. The flows overtopped the channel banks in some areas as high as 8 feet, damaged the culverts under Potato Canyon Road and Oak Glen Road, and damaged infrastructure and structures. A local emergency was declared in September 2022 and extended through June 2023. NCRS/ USDA is providing federal funds to the County for the restoration of Birch Creek Channel and related culvert repairs. District Operations staff has been working under emergency RGP63 which expires on April 30, 2023, in accordance with Federal rules and policies governing the RGP63 process. USACE staff determined the appropriate course of action to complete repairs in Birch Creek Channel beyond April 30 is to obtain authorization under a NWP Permit. For the upfront activity, the County proposes to excavate sediment and repair/replace damaged culverts and adjacent uplands using the following equipment: approximately (4) loaders, (3) excavators, (20) dump trucks, (2) small dozers, and a water truck. Excavated materials would be transported offsite to designated stockpile locations. Approximately 1.01 acres of WoUS/State will be temporarily impacted; less than 0.01 ac of non-wetland WoUS/State will be permanently impacted from placement of additional culvert rip-rap protection during the upfront initial sediment removal effort to occur in 2023.