



City of Hermosa Beach

Information Item

DATE: Friday, May 21, 2021
TO: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: City Manager and Public Works staff
SUBJECT: Enhanced Watershed Management Plan (EWMP) Update

Executive Summary

The current National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit (MS4 Permit) requires permittees to submit an updated Enhanced Watershed Management Plan (EWMP) with an amended Reasonable Assurance Analysis (RAA) by June 30, 2021. The updated EWMP and RAA must incorporate water quality data, control measure performance data, and any other data informing the adaptive management process gathered through December 31, 2020. This EWMP update process includes a community engagement virtual event held on May 19, 2021, along with identification of regional projects to help meet pollution reduction requirements. Staff will present the draft EWMP document to the City Council at the June 8, 2021, meeting. Upon Council approval, staff will submit the updated EWMP to the Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Background

In 2013, the cities of Hermosa Beach, Torrance, Redondo Beach, Manhattan Beach and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District formed the Beach Cities Group to develop an EWMP to comply with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board's (Regional Board) 2012 MS4 Permit. At that time, the Beach Cities Group entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to cost share the development of the EWMP and a Coordinated Integrated Monitoring Plan (CIMP). On April 18, 2016, the Beach Cities Group was directed by the Executive Officer of the Regional Board to begin implementation of the EWMP immediately, including construction of identified capital projects.

Following the Regional Board's approval of the EWMP in 2016, the City, in partnership with the Beach Cities Group, submitted a successful application to the State Board for funding the design and construction of the Greenbelt Infiltration Project. The Greenbelt Infiltration Project was the highest priority project in the EWMP due to its potential contribution toward achievement of the pollutant reduction goals. However, due to project complications and delays, City Council approved the dissolution or revision of the project MOU at the March 26, 2019, meeting.

On July 28, 2020, staff returned to City Council with a request to dissolve the MOU related to design of the Greenbelt Infiltration project and to appropriate \$160,000 to fund a feasibility study to explore alternate projects to achieve storm water diversion and pollution reductions equivalent to what would have been achieved by the cancelled Hermosa Greenbelt Infiltration Project. This continued search for alternative projects involves



City of Hermosa Beach

Information Item

reanalyzing existing concepts and researching new projects throughout the region with the goal of combining multiple smaller projects to achieve compliance goals. Additionally, the Regional Board recently approved a 3-year extension of the group's primary pollution reduction deadline (Santa Monica Bay Bacteria TMDL), which gives the group until July 2024 to identify and construct projects. A formal request for an additional time extension on pollutant reduction goals will be considered as that deadline nears.

Analysis

Since the Beach Cities Group EWMP was approved in 2016, significant advancements have been made in stormwater project planning and reasonable assurance analysis (RAA) modeling. Additionally, the group has gained invaluable experience and insight with respect to implementation of the EWMP, understanding more about both the opportunities and challenges they face in successfully implementing effective stormwater projects.

In particular, the updated Beach Cities Group EWMP was revised in the following critical ways:

- **Incorporation of newly available, EWMP-specific data.** The Beach Cities Group has been successfully implementing its Coordinated Integrated Monitoring Program since 2015, resulting in five years of outfall and receiving water monitoring data from the EWMP area. Coupled with other regional studies and data, this has allowed for a more-definitive determination of whether MS4 outfalls are causing or contributing to receiving water exceedances.
- **Utilization of the recently updated, Countywide RAA modeling tool.** The revised RAA uses the newly released WMMS 2 modeling platform to maintain consistency with the majority of RAAs across Los Angeles County. This model was further calibrated and validated using Beach Cities CIMP monitoring data collected through June 30, 2020, to best reflect the baseline hydrology and water quality conditions within the Beach Cities EWMP Area.
- **A focus on multi-benefit regional projects.** Although distributed projects are necessary, regional projects are generally preferable as they provide multiple benefits, are more cost-effective, and have a higher likelihood of receiving outside funding. The Beach Cities Group is committed to emphasizing regional, multi-benefit projects, including regional green streets that seek to maximize community benefits and amplify other environmental objectives.

Incorporating these changes, the revised Beach Cities Group EWMP more accurately reflects the actual water quality and flow conditions in the EWMP Area, provides updated, measurable milestones that can be tracked over time, and identifies implementable, cost-effective solutions to achieve compliance.



City of Hermosa Beach

Information Item

Community Engagement and Proposed Projects

Part of the EWMP update process is community engagement on the document's development and the identification of regional projects. To facilitate community engagement, the project public relations consultant is developing a website for the EWMP update to serve the Beach Cities Group communities. The consultant hosted a community meeting on May 19, 2021, to provide a high-level overview of the process and gather feedback on the proposed projects identified for each city. Details on the community meeting can be found on the City's website and calendar and staff will utilize City media to get the information out to the community.

In Hermosa Beach, the consultant team has proposed installation of dry wells that, in combination with the projects proposed in the other cities "upstream", should help the City meet its required storm water run-off volume reduction goals. A dry well is a bored, drilled, or driven shaft whose depth is greater than its width. These dry wells would most likely be prefabricated storage chambers or pipe segments. Dry wells are similar to a tube in the ground. No bigger than a few feet in diameter and marked at the surface by a maintenance access hole and inlet, they serve to temporarily store and subsequently infiltrate stormwater runoff. Dry wells are more cost effective and logistically manageable than a large regional infiltration project and allow much greater flexibility for siting. As shown in the schematic below, dry wells installed in the vicinity of Pacific Coast Highway and the neighborhood to the east could potentially provide to storm water capture necessary (in conjunction with projects in our partner cities) to meet the mandates of the MS4 permit. These proposed dry wells will help satisfy the requirement of the EWMP update to identify potential projects, but the final quantity and locations will be determined via further investigation and community engagement. Additionally, as other regional projects are studied and constructed, Hermosa Beach's required projects could be adjusted to incorporate other types of measures.

