

● **Riverside County Integrated Project — Quarterly Report Ending December 2004**

Summary

This report provides a summary of activities during the period October through December 2004, relating to Metropolitan's efforts and coordination with the development of the Riverside County Integrated Project.

Attachments

Attachment 1 – Mid County Parkway
Attachment 2 – State Route 79

Detailed Report

Background

The Riverside County Integrated Project (RCIP) consists of three components:

- Community Environmental and Transportation Acceptability Program (CETAP)
- Adopted 2003 Riverside County General Plan (RCGP)
- Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)

Riverside County continues to develop the RCIP to address the housing, transportation, and economic needs of existing and future populations within Riverside County with the limited natural resources and sensitivities of the natural environment. Riverside County has adopted two of the components listed above. The General Plan was adopted on October 7, 2003 and the MSHCP was adopted on June 17, 2003.

The County's current focus is on the planning of regional transportation projects (i.e., CETAP'S Mid County Parkway and improvements to State Route 79). Metropolitan staff is working closely with County personnel to minimize the impacts of these projects on Metropolitan facilities and to seek out potential right of way opportunities for future Metropolitan projects (such as the Central Pool Augmentation Program) along the proposed transportation alignments.

Activities This Quarter

Community Environmental and Transportation Acceptability Program (CETAP) – The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) is processing a comprehensive transportation plan (i.e., CETAP) for Riverside County. A primary element of the plan includes the planning, design and construction of a new east-west highway corridor principally within western Riverside County to the south of Lake Mathews. The RCTC is currently conducting environmental analyses of the east-west corridor along Ramona Expressway & Cajalco Road (i.e., the Mid County Parkway), south of Lake Mathews and traversing the Lake Mathews/Estelle Mountain Multiple Species Reserve (see Attachment 1). Riverside County has outlined a draft schedule for the project, which shows completion of environmental documentation for the project occurring in late 2007 and construction beginning in 2010. Metropolitan is working cooperatively with Riverside County on this project and has recently issued entry permits for access onto Metropolitan's lands, to assist Riverside County in conducting environmental studies along the subject corridor. In order to minimize the impacts of the project on Metropolitan lands and facilities, staff has also been a participant in monthly project meetings for stakeholders within the roadway expansion corridor.

Concurrent with the work being conducted on the Mid County Parkway, RCTC and the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) initiated an 18-month joint study in May 2004 to evaluate alternative alignments for a transportation corridor linking Riverside County to Orange County. Included in this study is an alternative that would tunnel below the Cleveland National Forest, along the same alignment as Metropolitan's

EIR-approved Central Pool Augmentation (CPA) tunnel. Metropolitan will continue to meet with these agencies on a regular basis to ensure the transportation corridor does not negatively impact Metropolitan's existing and planned facilities.

In addition to CETAP, other regional transportation corridors are currently being planned that could impact Metropolitan's facilities or development plans adjacent to Diamond Valley Lake (DVL) and Lake Skinner. These transportation corridors include the proposed extension of Domenigoni Parkway westerly to I-215 and the widening and relocation of State Route 79 (i.e., Winchester Road) west of DVL, between Gilman Springs and Keller Roads (see attachment 2). Riverside County has outlined a draft schedule for this project as well, which shows completion of environmental documentation occurring in late 2008 and construction beginning in 2009.

Riverside County General Plan (RCGP) – Staff continues to monitor Metropolitan's land holdings for land use incompatibilities with the adopted General Plan through review of proposed General Plan Amendments. In late 2004, Metropolitan coordinated with Riverside County on an initial "Multi-Cycle Correction Site Assessment" to the adopted General Plan, to correct minor land use incompatibilities on Metropolitan's lands. The changes identified through the "Multi-Cycle Correction Site Assessment" were incorporated through an amendment to the General Plan in late 2004. Riverside County will ultimately conduct a parcel-by-parcel zoning consistency analysis of land holdings, consistent with the amended General Plan land uses. This effort will occur as early as summer 2005. Metropolitan will coordinate with Riverside County to ensure this parcel-by-parcel zoning is compatible with Metropolitan's existing and planned land uses.

Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) – The MSHCP was adopted by Riverside County on June 17, 2003. Nearly one-year later on June 22, 2004, state and federal regulators approved Riverside County's far-reaching Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan, issuing permits required to implement the plan and proceed with creating a proposed 500,000-acre reserve system in western Riverside County.

Metropolitan will continue to coordinate with Riverside County and other agencies on these developments, as they may directly affect Metropolitan land holdings (including conservation land) and future water delivery projects.

Activities Next Quarter

Metropolitan staff will:

- Continue to monitor and coordinate with Riverside County regarding all proposed transportation corridors that potentially affect Metropolitan's lands or facilities.
- Continue to coordinate with Riverside County on forthcoming "Multi-Cycle Correction Site Assessments" to the adopted General Plan, to address minor land use inconsistencies on Metropolitan lands.
- Continue coordination with Riverside County and resource agency staff regarding the MSHCP, to ensure compliance with Metropolitan's conservation easements and mitigation requirements on existing Metropolitan reserve lands.
- Continue formal meetings with Riverside County on all components of the RCIP, as well as other ancillary projects being planned by Riverside County.



