NOTICE OF PREPARATION

To:	California Office of Planning and Research, Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Other Interested Parties
From:	The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Environmental Planning Section 700 North Alameda Street Los Angeles, California 90012
Subject:	Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report and Notice of Public Scoping Meetings
Project:	Pure Water Southern California
Lead Agency:	The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California
Review Period:	September 30, 2022, to November 14, 2022

Pure Water Southern California (formerly called the Regional Recycled Water Program) is a proposed partnership between The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) and the Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (Sanitation Districts) to beneficially reuse cleaned wastewater that currently is being discharged to the Pacific Ocean from the Sanitation Districts' Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) in the city of Carson. The cleaned wastewater would be purified through a new Advanced Water Purification facility constructed on undeveloped property within the JWPCP to produce approximately 150 million gallons per day of purified water. This purified water would then be transported via new conveyance facilities as far north as the city of Azusa and as far east as the city of Upland to new or existing water distribution facilities. The purified water could be used to recharge the West Coast, Central, Main San Gabriel, and Orange County groundwater basins through spreading facilities and injection wells and to augment water supplies at water treatment plants owned and operated by Metropolitan in the cities of La Verne and Yorba Linda, by the Three Valleys Municipal Water District in the city of Claremont, and/or by the Inland Empire Utilities Agency in the city of Upland.

Pure Water Southern California facilities would be located primarily within Los Angeles County, with some facilities possibly extending into western San Bernardino County. However, the potential recipients of purified water generated and delivered by these facilities are spread over a much wider geographic area. At project completion, Pure Water Southern California would provide nearly 155,000 acre-feet per year of sustainable, high-quality water to supplement existing supplies in the Southern California region.

PUREWATER
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Attachment A to this Notice of Preparation (NOP) contains: (1) an overview of Pure Water Southern California; (2) a description of its components, anticipated construction and operational activities, and phasing of work; (3) a summary of the probable environmental effects; and (4) the expected level of environmental analysis. Additional information regarding Pure Water Southern California can be found at: www.mwdh2o.com/purewater.

Notice of Preparation

This NOP has been prepared to inform federal, state, and local agencies; non-governmental organizations; members of the public; and other interested parties that Metropolitan, acting as the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Pure Water Southern California. Metropolitan is seeking input regarding the suggested scope and content of the EIR, including potential impacts, feasible mitigation measures, and reasonable alternatives.

Once certified, the EIR may be used by various public agencies in conjunction with their issuance of permits, approvals, or funding for Pure Water Southern California. To that end, this NOP is being sent to responsible, trustee, and other public agencies as part of the review process required under CEQA (Public Resources Code Section 21080.4) and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Section 15082). In addition to any comments on the scope and content of the EIR, Metropolitan requests that responsible and trustee agencies indicate their specific statutory responsibilities in connection with Pure Water Southern California.

Pure Water Southern California is considered a project of statewide, regional, or areawide significance (California Code of Regulations Section 15206(b)). Accordingly, Metropolitan will conduct formal scoping meetings for the EIR (California Code of Regulations Section 15082(c)) and will submit the Draft EIR to the State Clearinghouse and appropriate metropolitan council of governments for review and comment once completed (California Code of Regulations Section 15206(a)).

Submission of NOP Comments

Comments on this NOP should be submitted as soon as possible, **but no later than November 14, 2022**. Comments should include the name and mailing address and/or email address of a contact person. All parties who have submitted their names and contact information will be placed on the distribution list to receive the Notice of Availability of the Draft EIR. Comments may be submitted using any of the following methods:

Mail to:	Ms. Ana Reyes The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Environmental Planning Section P.O. Box 54153 Los Angeles, CA 90054-0153
Email to:	EP@mwdh2o.com (reference “Pure Water Southern California” in the subject line)
Online comment portal:	Available at www.mwdh2o.com/purewatercomments
Virtual scoping meetings:	Currently scheduled for: October 12, 2022, 6 p.m. October 18, 2022, 12 noon October 27, 2022, 7 p.m. October 29, 2022, 10 a.m.

	Please visit our website at www.mwdh2o.com/purewater for updated meeting information. Live translation in Spanish will be offered. Live translation to select other languages may be available upon request. Please e-mail your language needs to purewater@mwdh2o.com at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.
Community events:	Comment cards will be available at the Pure Water Southern California table at various community events. Please visit our website at www.mwdh2o.com/purewater for a list of events, dates, and locations.

Date: 9-27-2022

Signature: Jennifer Harriger

Jennifer Harriger
Manager, Environmental Planning Section

Attachment A
Pure Water Southern California
Notice of Preparation

BACKGROUND

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) is a public agency made up of 26 member agencies serving 19 million people in the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Ventura, Riverside, and San Bernardino. Metropolitan imports water from the Colorado River via the Colorado River Aqueduct and from Northern California via the State Water Project to supplement local water supplies. In addition to importing water, Metropolitan supports its member agencies in developing local water conservation, recycling, storage, and resource management programs.

The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts (Sanitation Districts) consist of 24 independent special districts that form a regional public agency that collects and treats wastewater for over 5.5 million people in Los Angeles County. The Sanitation Districts' Joint Water Pollution Control Plant (JWPCP) in the city of Carson is one of eleven wastewater treatment plants in their system and is one of the largest wastewater treatment plants in the world. The JWPCP provides primary and secondary treatment for approximately 260 million gallons per day (MGD) of wastewater, which currently is discharged to the Pacific Ocean.

Pure Water Southern California would be a partnership between Metropolitan and the Sanitation Districts to develop and implement a regional recycled water program. These agencies began exploring the concept for such a program in 2010, and since that time have conducted a number of preliminary evaluations and investigations. These have included a pilot study (2012), a feasibility study (2016), a conceptual planning study (2019), two white papers (2019 and 2020), an economic impact study (2021), and a variety of technical analyses of proposed system components and processes. In addition, construction of a 0.5-MGD demonstration-scale purification facility at the JWPCP was completed and began operations in October 2019. This facility is being used to evaluate treatment performance and to provide an opportunity for public outreach and education.

As the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Lead Agency, Metropolitan is now in the scoping phase for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for Pure Water Southern California. This EIR will evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of Pure Water Southern California, as well as feasible mitigation measures and reasonable alternatives.

OVERVIEW OF PURE WATER SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

If approved, Pure Water Southern California would create and distribute a new sustainable water supply by harvesting the region's largest untapped source of cleaned wastewater. This new water supply would help reduce the region's dependence on imported water and would assist the region in addressing disruption to imported water supplies. This purified water would not only provide a more diversified water supply to Southern California, it also would enhance Metropolitan's operational resilience, reliability, and flexibility in the face of ongoing challenges including long-term drought and climate change.

Specifically, Pure Water Southern California would involve purification of cleaned wastewater from the JWPCP at a new Advanced Water Purification (AWP) facility to produce approximately 150 MGD, or nearly 155,000 acre-feet per year, of sustainable, high-quality water predominantly for indirect and direct potable reuse.

Indirect potable reuse, or IPR, refers to the introduction of purified recycled water into an environmental buffer, such as a groundwater basin, where the purified water would naturally blend with groundwater before it is extracted and introduced into a water supply system. Purified water from Pure Water Southern California would be used for IPR purposes by discharging the water into groundwater basins via spreading facilities and injection wells. Groundwater recharge via spreading facilities could occur at the San Gabriel Canyon Spreading Grounds, Santa Fe Spreading Grounds, other recharge areas near the Santa Fe Dam, Rio Hondo Coastal Spreading Grounds, San Gabriel Coastal Spreading Grounds, and Orange County Groundwater Basin Spreading Grounds. Groundwater recharge via injection wells could occur in the West Coast Groundwater Basin near the city of Carson and the Central Groundwater Basin in the city of Long Beach.

Direct potable reuse, or DPR, refers to the introduction of purified recycled water into an existing water supply system without first passing the water through an environmental buffer. The purified water can either be blended with other water flows into an existing water treatment plant (WTP) for further treatment or distributed directly to the potable water system. Treatment of the purified water to DPR standards could occur at the AWP facility itself or at one or more offsite locations, including Metropolitan's F.E. Weymouth (Weymouth) WTP in the city of La Verne, a potential satellite facility to be located between the Santa Fe Dam area and the Weymouth WTP, the Three Valleys Municipal Water District Miramar WTP in the city of Claremont, or the Inland Empire Utilities Agency Agua de Lejos WTP in the city of Upland. The specific location(s) for DPR treatment would be selected with the aim of maximizing operational flexibility and optimizing distribution of water within Metropolitan's service area.

In addition to these applications, agencies such as the West Basin Municipal Water District and Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) would be able to connect to the proposed conveyance facilities to serve industrial users. Furthermore, some water would be treated for irrigating parks and landscaping at or near the JWPCP.

Proposed facilities to implement Pure Water Southern California include modifications to the existing JWPCP, a new full-scale AWP facility located at the JWPCP, DPR treatment facilities, pipelines, pump stations, service connections, groundwater recharge improvements, and operation, maintenance, and ancillary facilities, as needed. The proposed facilities would potentially extend from the city of Carson in Los Angeles County to as far north as the city of Azusa and as far east as the city of Upland in western San Bernardino County. **Figure 1** shows the proposed project area and groundwater basins, as well as general locations for the major components associated with Pure Water Southern California, including treatment facilities, conveyance system, and groundwater recharge sites. **Figure 2** shows the specific location of the proposed AWP facility within the JWPCP site.

Construction and operation of Pure Water Southern California would require real property acquisitions in the form of temporary and permanent rights from public agencies, private utilities, and private landowners. Temporary rights such as temporary easements, leases, licenses, and permits would be required for temporary use of property for construction activities. Permanent rights, such as fee interests and permanent easements, would be required for the pipelines, pump stations, spreading facilities, and a potential satellite DPR facility.

DESCRIPTION OF COMPONENTS

Treatment Facilities

Pure Water Southern California would require construction and operation of various treatment facilities at the JWPCP. These would include modifications to the existing JWPCP treatment facilities, a new full-

scale AWP facility, and potentially a smaller facility to treat water for non-potable uses. In addition, facilities to further treat purified water from the AWP facility to DPR standards would be required. Potential locations for DPR treatment include the AWP facility; the Weymouth, Miramar, or Agua de Lejos WTPs; or a satellite facility, as described above.

In general, construction activities associated with all these treatment facilities would include site clearing; excavation; installation, upgrade, or relocation of utilities; installation of equipment, paving, landscaping, and associated site improvements; construction of buildings and other facilities; and storage of materials and equipment. Operational activities associated with these treatment facilities would include maintenance of facilities, structures, and equipment; storage of equipment and materials; delivery, storage, and management of treatment chemicals; and monitoring of water quality.

Proposed treatment facilities located at the JWPCP would be constructed on the Sanitation Districts' property bounded by West Lomita Boulevard to the south, South Main Street to the east, and developed portions of the JWPCP to the north and west. In addition to the construction activities described above, construction activities at this site also would include demolition of an existing Sanitation Districts' warehouse and maintenance basin; closure of existing oil wells; and modifications to or construction of new biological treatment processes. Construction is not anticipated to affect or interfere with ongoing operational activities at the JWPCP. In addition to the operational activities described above, this site also would support public tours and administrative services. Water residuals from each treatment process, except for reverse osmosis, would be re-routed back into the wastewater stream flowing into the JWPCP. Concentrate from the reverse osmosis process would be discharged to the Pacific Ocean via the existing JWPCP ocean outfall tunnels. No modifications to the existing outfall tunnels or their operations are proposed.

Proposed DPR treatment facilities at the Weymouth WTP would be located within the WTP boundaries south of Vera Cruz Street, west of Wheeler Avenue, north of Highland Drive, and east of Sedalia Avenue and Moreno Avenue in the city of La Verne. The location of the proposed DPR treatment facilities at Miramar and Agua de Lejos WTPs would be determined by their respective agencies. The Miramar WTP is located south of Alamosa Drive, west of San Antonio Creek, north of East Miramar Avenue, and east of Padua Avenue in the city of Claremont. The Agua de Lejos WTP is located south of West 18th Street, west of North Benson Avenue, north of West 17th Street, and southeast of State Route 210 in the city of Upland. The potential satellite DPR facility would be located between the Santa Fe Dam area and the Weymouth WTP at a location to be determined.

Conveyance System

The conveyance system would be comprised of two pipelines – the backbone pipeline and the DPR pipeline – and at least five associated pump stations. The backbone pipeline would consist of a 7-foot-diameter pipe and would extend approximately 42 miles from the AWP facility to the existing San Gabriel Canyon Spreading Grounds in the city of Azusa. The backbone pipeline would potentially pass through the cities of Carson, Long Beach, Lakewood, Cerritos, Bellflower, Norwalk, Downey, Santa Fe Springs, Duarte, Pico Rivera, Industry, El Monte, Baldwin Park, Irwindale, and Azusa, as well as unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County. The pipeline would be buried under public roadways and in rights-of-way situated along the San Gabriel River that currently are held by Southern California Edison, LADWP, Los Angeles County Flood Control District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and private parties. The backbone pipeline would have the capacity to convey approximately 150 MGD of purified water and would deliver this water for various purposes along the alignment, including IPR, DPR, and industrial applications.

Three proposed pump stations would pump water along the backbone pipeline from the AWP facility uphill to the San Gabriel Canyon Spreading Grounds. One pump station would be located on the same site as the AWP facility; a second pump station would be located near Whittier Narrows in the city of Industry, city of Pico Rivera or Los Angeles County depending on site selection; and a third would be located near the Santa Fe Spreading Grounds in the city of Irwindale or city of Baldwin Park. Although the sites for the latter two pump stations have not yet been specifically identified, they would be located adjacent to the backbone pipeline.

A separate DPR pipeline would convey purified water approximately 12 miles eastward from the Santa Fe Dam area or San Gabriel Canyon Spreading Grounds area to the Weymouth WTP. Potential alignments under consideration for the DPR pipeline follow existing roadways through the cities of Azusa, Baldwin Park, Irwindale, Glendora, Covina, West Covina, San Dimas, and La Verne, as well as unincorporated portions of Los Angeles County. The San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District's existing Devil Canyon-Azusa Pipeline (Azusa Pipeline) could potentially be used to convey up to approximately 25 MGD of purified water to the Weymouth WTP; however, its limited capacity would not meet DPR treatment goals. Therefore, while the Azusa Pipeline could be used on an interim basis, Metropolitan proposes to ultimately construct a new DPR pipeline. At least two new pump stations would be required along the DPR Pipeline and/or Azusa Pipeline to pump the water eastward towards the Weymouth WTP. The Azusa Pipeline may also be used to convey water further east to the Miramar WTP and the Agua De Lejos WTP, which would require at least two additional pump stations along the Azusa Pipeline. Pump station locations would be determined at a later time.

Construction activities for the pipelines would be temporary in nature and would utilize a variety of methods based on the characteristics of each portion of the alignment. These methods would include trench excavation and backfill, as well as several different trenchless methods. To the extent feasible, trenchless methods would be used to minimize impacts to the San Gabriel River, major drainage channels, the transportation system, sensitive resources, and areas with limited rights-of-way. Construction activities associated with the pump stations also would be temporary and would include site clearing and grading, excavation, utility construction and/or relocation, installation of pumps and associated infrastructure, construction of buildings, paving, and fencing.

Temporary construction staging and storage areas would be required along the alignments to support these construction activities. The staging and storage areas would have various uses, but generally would include installation of construction trailers, temporary utility connections, equipment and materials storage, and construction employee parking. To the extent feasible, previously disturbed sites would be selected based on availability during final design or at the time that construction is ready to proceed. Site preparation for the staging and storage areas would include clearing and grading, minor excavation for utility connections, fencing, and possible gravel placement.

Operational activities for the pipelines and pump stations would be minimal and would include operating and maintaining the pump stations, patrolling the pipeline, maintaining patrol roads and facilities, securing the pump stations and other structures, periodically dewatering the pipeline for inspections/testing, and conducting repairs as needed.

Groundwater Recharge and Service Connections

Metropolitan would provide metered service connections at various locations along the backbone and DPR pipelines to enable agencies to obtain water for industrial, groundwater recharge, and DPR uses. Smaller diameter lateral pipelines to connect the meters to new or existing facilities, as well as to provide non-potable water at and near the JWPCP, would be developed, constructed, and managed by these agencies.

Construction activities related to groundwater recharge are anticipated to include improvements to existing spreading facilities, construction of new spreading facilities, installation of new injection wells, relocation of existing production wells, and installation of service connections to these facilities. Construction activities associated with service connections for industrial and DPR uses would include installation of smaller distribution pipelines and ancillary facilities from the backbone and DPR pipelines.

Operational activities for these facilities would include releasing purified water into and maintaining spreading facilities, injecting purified water into groundwater basins, maintaining and operating injection and production wells, and inspecting, maintaining, and operating service connections and pipelines.

Phasing

Construction and operation of Pure Water Southern California are expected to occur in two phases. To augment regional water supplies in the near term, an early delivery component as part of Phase 1 is proposed to start construction in 2025 and be operational in 2028. During this early delivery component, facilities to treat and pump up to 30 MGD at the JWPCP and approximately seven miles of the backbone pipeline through the city of Carson would be simultaneously constructed. Construction of this portion of the backbone pipeline would enable service connections to deliver purified water for industrial and groundwater recharge uses, as well as to the Sanitation Districts for non-potable uses.

Upon completion of the early delivery component, construction of Phase 1 would continue at the AWP facility to produce approximately 100 MGD of purified water, and the remainder of the backbone pipeline and associated pump stations would also be completed. Phase 1 is anticipated to be complete by late 2032. For DPR purposes, it is currently anticipated that the Azusa Pipeline would be used to convey purified water from the backbone pipeline to the Weymouth WTP on either an interim or permanent basis, which would require the construction of new pump stations, interconnecting pipelines, and control structures and potential improvement of appurtenance facilities along the Azusa Pipeline. Phase 1 also could include the construction of a new DPR treatment facility at the Weymouth WTP on either an interim or permanent basis, as well as groundwater recharge improvements, new service connections, and lateral pipelines.

Phase 2 would involve expansion of the AWP facility to purify up to a total of 150 MGD. Phase 2 also would include construction of DPR treatment facilities at the AWP facility, at a satellite DPR site, or at one or more WTPs, as well as the DPR pipeline that extends eastward from the backbone pipeline. Although the timing of this phase is uncertain, it is assumed for the purposes of this environmental analysis that construction would start in 2033 and that Pure Water Southern California would be complete and fully operational in 2036.

PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

In accordance with Section 15126 of the CEQA Guidelines, the EIR will assess the significant environmental effects of Pure Water Southern California, including direct, indirect, cumulative, and growth-inducing effects. Due to the size and scope of this undertaking, Metropolitan committed to preparing an EIR from the outset and, accordingly, did not prepare an initial study. As such, the EIR will address the full suite of resource categories contained in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

Probable environmental effects associated with Pure Water Southern California include:

- Air Quality: due to operation of heavy equipment, vehicular use, demolition of facilities, materials delivery, grading, excavation, and hauling during construction, as well as water treatment activities, pumping, and vehicular use during operations

- Biological Resources: due to grading, excavation, and noise during construction
- Cultural Resources: due to grading and excavation activities during construction
- Energy: due to heavy equipment and vehicular use during construction, as well as water treatment activities, pumping, and vehicular use during operations
- Geology/Soils: due to grading and excavation activities
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions: due to heavy equipment and vehicular use during construction, as well as water treatment activities, pumping, and vehicular use during operations
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials: due to the potential to encounter existing contamination during construction and the transport and handling of hazardous materials for water treatment operations
- Hydrology/Water Quality: due to grading, excavation, and materials storage associated with construction, as well as long-term impacts due to new impervious surfaces
- Land Use/Planning: due to potential conflict with land use plans, policies, or regulations adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating environmental effects
- Noise: due to operation of heavy equipment and vehicles, demolition of facilities, materials delivery, and hauling during construction, as well as activities associated with water treatment facilities, pumping, and vehicular use during operations
- Transportation: due to construction worker and equipment travel, hauling of material, and potential re-routing of traffic to avoid construction areas within roadways, as well as traffic generated during operations of water treatment facilities
- Tribal Cultural Resources: due to grading and excavation activities during construction
- Utilities/Service Systems: due to relocation of existing utilities and generation of solid waste during construction

In addition to providing a detailed analysis of potential impacts in each of these resource categories, the EIR will identify feasible mitigation measures and/or a reasonable range of alternatives that could avoid or reduce any significant impacts, as applicable.

Pure Water Southern California is not anticipated to have any potentially significant environmental impacts in the following resource categories: Aesthetics; Agriculture and Forestry Resources; Mineral Resources; Population and Housing; Public Services; Recreation; and Wildfire. While these resource categories will be examined in the EIR, the level of analysis is not anticipated to be as detailed as for the other resource categories noted above.

EXPECTED LEVEL OF ANALYSIS

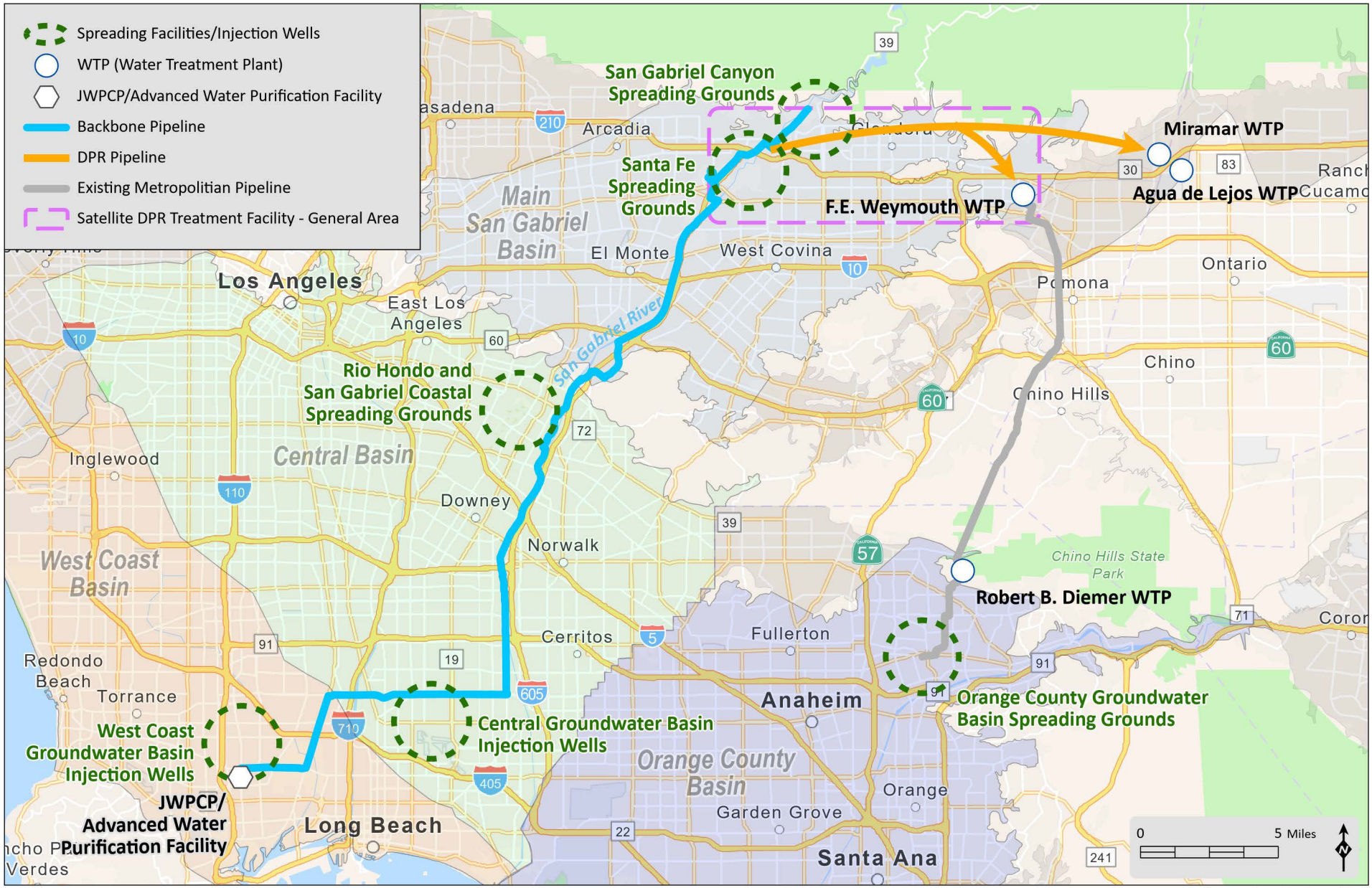
Design information for Pure Water Southern California currently exists at a varying level of detail. As such, it is anticipated that the EIR will provide both program-level and project-level analyses depending on the nature and scope of information available for each component. In general, the AWP facility (including the associated pump station and potential DPR treatment facilities), JWPCP modifications, and backbone pipeline are anticipated to be analyzed at the project level since sufficient design and technical information already exist.

Information also is available regarding the anticipated operational equipment for all pump stations along the backbone pipeline. Accordingly, impacts associated with air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and energy demand can be evaluated at a project level. However, the locations of two of the three

pump stations have not yet been determined. Therefore, site-specific impacts from these facilities may require subsequent environmental review.

Lastly, at present there is only conceptual-level information available for the potential DPR-related treatment facilities at the Weymouth WTP, Miramar WTP, Agua de Lejos WTP, and the satellite facility; DPR pipeline and associated pump stations; the groundwater recharge facilities; and the various service connections. Accordingly, these components are anticipated to be analyzed only at the program level in this EIR.

Once certified, Metropolitan and other public agencies will consider and rely on the information in this EIR prior to taking any discretionary action with respect to Pure Water Southern California, such as issuing approvals, permits, or licenses; entering into contracts or agreements; or providing grants, loans, or other forms of financial assistance. In doing so, these agencies will determine whether the potential environmental impacts associated with that discretionary action already were addressed in the certified EIR or, alternatively, whether additional environmental review and analysis are required. The nature and scope of any additional review and analysis will be determined in accordance with the criteria set forth in CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162, 15163, and 15164.



Source: Base Map Layer (Esri)

PUREWATER SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Project Area

Figure 1

Source: Base Map Layer (Esri)

PUREWATER SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

JWPCP/Advanced Water Purification Facility

Figure 2