Environmental Review Documents Outline for Transfer/Processing Facilities and Solid Waste Disposal Sites

This outline was developed as a guide to Lead Agencies in the preparation of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation and to Responsible Agencies for their review of documentation for the construction and/or operation of a transfer/processing facility and a solid waste disposal site requiring a solid waste facility permit (SWFP). All this information is pertinent to the processing and issuance of a SWFP and is of great benefit if discussed fully in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or at an appropriate level of detail in a Negative Declaration (ND) or Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The appropriate level of detail within the CEQA document should be determined by development of an Initial Study (preliminary environmental impact analysis) and early consultation with the Lead Agency, Enforcement Agency, and CalRecycle. The information below identifies pertinent information to be included in an Initial Study to support the development of a ND, MND, or EIR (note, an Initial Study can also be used as an option to support a project that has been determined to be exempt from the CEQA process).

General Background Information

- Project Location (including Township, Range and APN where appropriate)
- Owner and operator of the facility (property owner if different)
- Name and registration number of site design engineer
- Need for project
- Area served and population
    - City
    - County
    - Out-of-county
- Service projections for the life of the facility taking into account AB 939 waste diversion mandates
- Existing facilities
- Site-specific map, regional map and map of surrounding area
- Conformance to Waste Management Plan (compliance with PRC Section 50000)
- Designation in General Plan (compliance with PRC Section 50000.5)

Project Description

Site Description

- Topographical map
- Size of site (acres or square feet)
- Site design, including but not limited to site/layout map with building locations, turn around areas, storage areas, well locations, and property boundaries
- Total capacity
- Average and maximum quantity of individual types of waste received daily
- Sources of individual types of waste received daily
- Current land use
- historic land use
- Current zoning
- Detailed environmental setting, including but not limited to climatological factors, physical setting, ground and surface water, soils, surrounding land use
- Type of users of the site (commercial, public, private)
- Construction description (e.g. grading plan, implementation timeframes)
- List of project-related approvals required by federal, state and local agencies

In addition, a site description at a disposal site should include:

- Site design including but not limited to areas to be filled ("footprint") and sequence of filling.
- Classification of disposal site
- Ultimate land uses (postclosure)
- Final height of fill areas
- Expected facility life span

Design and Operation

- Verification of compliance with CalRecycle's State Minimum Standards related to solid waste handling.
- General facility design
    - Configuration and equipment
    - Energy recovery components
    - Resource recovery components
    - Screening of incompatible wastes
    - Typical operation cycle, processing time for each phase
- Waste characterization
- Waste handling method
    - Removal frequency
    - Final deposition: route, distance and time to travel to disposal site
- Equipment

    - Number and types
    - Emission projections
    - Stand-by equipment availability, number and type of equipment
- Operating days and hours (days/weeks, hours/day, start/stop)
    - Describe the operating cycle of the facility
- Traffic number and types of vehicles
    - Access routes (ingress/egress)
    - Unloading/loading (recovered materials, waste transfer vehicles)
    - On-site roads
    - Public and commercial routing
    - Number and types of vehicles entering and leaving the site per day
    - Emission projections
    - Modification required during inclement weather
- Provisions for site security (fencing, gates, police or security protection)
- Fire controls
    - Nearest fire department
    - On-site
- Vector controls
- Litter controls
- Odor controls
- Dust controls
- Drainage
    - Surface water run-on and run-off
    - Retention ponds, basins
- Noise and vibration control provisions
    - Noise levels generated by the project (construction and operation)
    - Vibration levels generated by the project (construction and operation)
    - Weight scales
- Resource recovery
- Types
- Volume
- Storage
    - Time
    - Location
- Handling
- Market
- Energy recovery
    - Amount
    - Type
    - Uses
    - Delivery
- Water supply
    - Source, well or municipal, sufficiency
- Leachate control

    - Separator
    - Disposal, public sewer or other
- Air emissions
    - Background
    - Project
- Method of handling special wastes (i.e., liquids, sludge, white goods)
- Method of handling hazardous waste
    - Exclusion
    - Storage
    - Removal
- Number of employees and duties
- Visual screening (compatible with specific general plan policies or viewshed ordinances)

In addition, a site description at a disposal site should include:

- Leachate control (landfill and impoundment basins)
    - Liner system type
        - Permeability
        - Compaction of underlying soils
    - Collection system
    - Recirculation
- Leachate monitoring system
- Landfill gas monitoring and control systems
- Erosion controls
- Sedimentation controls, such as siltation basins and location of such controls
- Drainage facilities (run-on and run-off)
    - Drainage plan (can be included with site map)
- Closure procedures (design, construction, operation)
    - Anticipated date
    - Gas and leachate monitoring and removal system
    - Final cover
        - Thickness
        - Permeability
        - Grading
    - Revegetation
    - Responsibility for maintenance
    - Responsibility for monitoring
    - Postclosure land use (compatible open space or other uses)

Existing Environment

Climate

- Average precipitation
    - Seasonal

    - Annual
- Seasonal temperature range
- Wind conditions (wind rose)
    - Direction
    - Velocity
- Evaporation rate
    - Seasonal
    - Annual

Air

- Baseline air quality data (attainment status)
- Existing emissions
- Landfill equipment
    - Hauling vehicles
    - Other emission sources
- Project emissions
    - Landfill equipment
    - Hauling vehicles
    - Other emission sources
    - Dust including PM-10 data for project construction operations
- Landfill gas emissions
- Leachate evaporation
- Odor

Water

Surface water

- Existing surface waters (streams, rivers, etc.)
- Drainage courses
- Average seasonal flows
- Greatest anticipated 24 hour or 6 day rainfall amount
- Beneficial uses of waters
- Water quality analyses
- Watershed characteristics

Subsurface water

- Existing subsurface water (aquifer, aquiclude, etc.)
- Beneficial uses of waters
- Water quality analyses (site specific tests)
- Location of wells within one mile of site
- Depth to groundwater (from site specific tests)

Geology

- Description of subsurface strata (in place)

- Soils
- Unified soil classification (ch, oh, etc.)
- Soil texture (percent passing through #200 sieve)
- Liquid limits
- Plasticity index
- Permeability of soils (field samples)
- Seismicity
    - Estimate of seismic risk to the site (faults underlying the site, distance to nearest fault, maximum probable earthquake, maximum ground acceleration of fault, etc.)
    - Liquefaction potential
    - Differential settlement potential
    - Boring logs (include locations)
- Mineral deposits (including gavels)

Land

- Description of site surface
- Maximum slope on the site
- Slope stability

Flora

- Description of site flora
- Vegetation which will be permanently removed
- Relation between vegetation and slope stability and erodibility
- Rare and endangered flora

Fauna

- Description of site fauna
- Resident population of rodents and other potential vectors
- Rare and endangered fauna

Noise

- Local noise ordinance criteria
- Background noise levels at and adjacent to site
- Location of sensitive noise receptors (senior living residents, schools, hospitals)

Social

- Growth inducement

Land use

- Zoning
- Adjacent land use

- Distance to nearest residences

Plan consistency

- General Plan
- Regional Plan (consistent with CIWMP)

Historical/Cultural

- Archaeological sites
- Historical sites
- Cultural sites

Traffic

- Existing traffic conditions

Aesthetics

- Compatible with specific general plan policies or viewshed ordinances

Organizations and people consulted

- Public response
- Public meetings
- Contributors to report (names and qualifications)
- Persons consulted

Cumulative Impacts and/or Significant Impact (only required for EIR)

- Climate
- Air
- Water
- Geology
- Land
- Flora
- Fauna
- Noise
- Social
- Historical/Cultural
- Traffic
- Aesthetics

Alternatives (only required for EIR)

- Review of alternative locations
- Other alternatives (e.g. reduced project)
- No project

Executive Summary (only required for EIR)

- Summary of project and consequences
- Impacts, mitigation measures and alternatives
- Areas of controversy
- Resolution of issues

Mitigation Reporting or Monitoring Program

- Identification of impacts
- Identification of mitigation measures
- Implementation schedule
- Monitoring frequency
- Responsible party having oversight with implementation of mitigation measures

CalRecycle's CEQA Review

A CEQA compliance review (by the Enforcement Agency and CalRecycle as a Responsible Agency) is required for the establishment, expansion, or change in operation(s) of a Solid Waste Facility (SWF) requiring the issuance or revision of a SWFP.

Under CEQA Guidelines, CCR Section 15096, CalRecycle acting as a Responsible Agency, is required to use the Environmental Document (ED) prepared by the Lead Agency in the CalRecycle permit approval or concurrence process. Once the ED is completed by the Lead Agency, CalRecycle staff (as a Responsible Agency), must determine whether or not the evaluation of potential environmental impacts assessed is adequate for CalRecycle use in the permitting process.

The purpose of CalRecycle staff's review, during the preparation of the document, is to help decision-makers (1) identify potential impacts from proposed projects, (2) determine whether any such impacts are significant, (3) ascertain whether significant impacts can be mitigated to a level of insignificance in compliance with the CEQA statutes and guidelines, and (4) develop a project description that can be used for solid waste permitting actions. In order for CalRecycle staff to ascertain that the ED is adequate for our use in the permitting process, the proposed project must be described in sufficient detail and the potential environmental impacts that may result from the proposed project must be identified along with mitigation measures to lessen the degree of the impact to less than significant.

If the Lead Agency identifies a potential significant environmental impact but finds that the impact is less than significant or that no mitigation is available or necessary, supporting documentation and/or studies should be specifically referenced and be made available for review or included in the ED to support such analysis.

CEQA Analysis and SWFP Conditions

CEQA Guidelines, Section 15063(a)(1) states that: "All phases of project planning, implementation and operation must be considered in the Initial Study of the project". This consideration, when evaluating for a SWFP revision, should consider the potential environmental impacts of any changes in design and operation of the facility that were not specifically considered in the existing SWFP.

When determining the adequacy of an ED for purposes of SWFP concurrence, CalRecycle staff will compare the design and operation of the facility as described in the SWFP with the project as described and evaluated in the ED. The first question is: does the CEQA evaluation for potential impacts resulting from the project thoroughly assess the potential primary and secondary impacts to the environment and/or public health and safety? The second question is: does the CEQA evaluation in the ED support the conditions of the proposed permit? For instance, does the ED also assess the potential traffic, noise, dust, vector and other impacts that can be associated with a significant increase in permitted waste throughput requested in a SWFP?

When this type of information is included and addressed in the ED, the CEQA process is greatly facilitated. When this type of information is not included in the project description or elsewhere in the ED, it becomes very difficult for CalRecycle staff to determine the adequacy of the ED for purposes of our environmental evaluation.

Disclaimer

The contents of this communication and any analysis, guidance, or other information herein are based on current, existing, known facts and legal authority as described to and understood by the author and/or CalRecycle at the time of this communication. Please be advised that any relevant facts or legal authority or authorities that are undisclosed or unknown at the time of this communication may affect or alter any analysis, guidance, or other information herein. Please be further advised that any analysis, guidance, or other information herein may be subject to change and/or correction based on changed facts or legal authority, actual or understood, subsequent to the time of this communication. No analysis, guidance, or other information herein should be construed as a waiver of any rights or remedies available to CalRecycle. Recipients of this communication are encouraged to seek the assistance of legal counsel to comply with applicable state law based on current facts and circumstances.