

Facility and Plan Review Subcommittee  
Los Angeles County Solid Waste Management Committee/  
Integrated Waste Management Task Force

**November 21, 2019**

Los Angeles County Public Works  
900 South Fremont Avenue  
Alhambra, CA 91803

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Betsey Landis, Chair, Environmental Organization Representative  
Mike Mohajer, General Public Representative  
Shikari Nakagawa-Ota, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health  
Carlos Ruiz, Los Angeles County Public Works  
Sam Shammass, County Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:

Jason Aspell, South Coast Air Quality Management District  
Reyna Pereira, City of Los Angeles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steve Cassulo, Waste Connections  
Brenda Eells, Jacobs Engineering Group, Inc.  
Gabriel Esparza, Los Angeles County Public Works  
Michael Harmon, Los Angeles County Public Works  
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens  
Omid Mazdizyani, Los Angeles County Public Works  
Josh Mills, Republic Services  
Carol Oyola, Los Angeles County Public Works  
Margarita Quiroz, Los Angeles County Public Works  
Vu Truong, Los Angeles County Public Works  
Justin Wallace, Chiquita Canyon Landfill Community Advisory Committee  
Daniel Wibisono, Los Angeles County Public Works

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Landis called the meeting to order at 11:09 a.m.

**II. APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER 19, 2019 MEETING MINUTES**

A motion to approve the Minutes from the October 17, 2019, Subcommittee Meeting, as corrected, was made by Mr. Mohajer and seconded by Mr. Ruiz. Motion passed unanimously.

**III. UPDATE ON SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL**

Odor Complaints

Mr. Truong provided an update on the Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL) odor complaints from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) for the month of October 2019 ([Link](#)).

- During the month of October 2019, 82 complaints were made to the AQMD hotline. Of those, 32 were classified as either trash or landfill gas, 22 were classified as no odor detected, and the remaining were listed as No Field Response or odor from other source.
- Between September 2019 and October 2019, the number of complaints received decreased from 95 to 82 complaints.
- Compared to October of last year, the number of complaints this October increased from 21 to 82 complaints.
- The total number of complaints received this year is 320.
- As of November 12, 2019, AQMD has issued two Odor Complaint Notice of Violations (NOVs) to SCL for the month of October 2019. The NOVs were issued for odor complaints received around 8 p.m. on Monday, October 21, 2019, and odor complaints received around 7 a.m. on Saturday, October 26, 2019. The odor complaint charts were made available to the subcommittee.

As requested by the subcommittee at last month's meeting, staff reached out to both the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) and AQMD requesting information regarding response and recovery from the Saddleridge Wildfire (Wildfire) at SCL. Staff will follow-up and compile the information and provide to the subcommittee at a subsequent Facility & Plan Review Subcommittee (FPRS) meeting.

Mr. Josh Mills, with Republic Services (Republic), gave an update on the Wildfire impacts and Republic's replacement plan, as well as the efforts that have been ongoing since the Wildfire broke out at the Landfill. He provided a power point presentation, with printed hardcopies for the Subcommittee which included a replacement plan, progress, and schedule, which was originally presented to the

SCAQMD Hearing Board at the October 29, 2019 Variance Hearing. Mr. Mills reported the following information related to the Wildfire:

- The Wildfire started on Thursday, October 11, 2019, and by Friday morning, October 12, 2019, many roads leading to the Landfill were closed. Republic's management and 11 contractors were escorted by police to get on-site to start closing off certain portions of the gas collection system that were impacted by the Fire.
- On Friday afternoon, Republic was coordinating with the City of Los Angeles, Los Angeles Fire Department, and California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding firefighting and extinguishing efforts. The Fire Department was very supportive in their actions and the Department knows exactly what to do.
- Landfill staff was on conference calls with their corporate office on Saturday, October 13, 2019, to obtain additional resources. By Sunday, October 14, 2020, Republic had approximately 50 contractors on site, and landfill gas experts from the corporate office and management. By Sunday evening, the Landfill had about 75 percent of the gas flows, pre-fire, being collected through the gas collection system with three main flares and four gas-to-energy turbines operating on generators.
- The Wildfire damaged at least 85 percent of the gas collection system on City Southside (closed portion) of the Landfill which is not operating at that time.
  - The City Southside of the Landfill is on a separate gas collection system than that on the County/City Northside (active portion) of the Landfill.
  - When the Wildfire reached the Landfill, there were 122 wells on the City Southside that were on fire, and to date, all 122 wells have been restored. Based on the progress, it looks like everything will be completed one month ahead of schedule.
- The Wildfire knocked out the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (DWP) and Southern California Edison (SCE) utility power that provides power to both the City Southside and the active side of the Landfill, which required the Landfill to to run on back-up generators. One generator is owned by Republic and the other was a rental. Mr. Mills stated that all power has now been restored at the Landfill, and all flares are operating with generators on standby.

- The closed City side of the Landfill, sage mitigation Deck A was completely burned, and 30 percent of Decks B and C were also burned. Since the Wildfire, Republic has had a preliminary evaluation of the sage mitigation decks and based on the initial recommendations from their consultant, the decks should be left alone because they will recover in two-to-three years.
  - Due to the damage to the underbrush, a fire relief plan was put together that updated the winterization plan that was provided to the SCL Local Enforcement Agency (SCL-LEA) stabilizing slopes both on the Landfill footprint and areas outside of the Landfill footprint.
  - They are also adding erosion matting on top of the hydroseeding. Ms. Landis asked if these were all active areas. Mr. Mills responded no, and that the biggest area is the closed portion of the Landfill. There are various areas off the Landfill footprint around the perimeter, in which they are hydroseeding. Mr. Shammass commented that the Sanitation District has had good luck at their landfills with putting the hydroseed first because the mat protects it from being washed away. Discussion ensued.

With Republic being one month ahead of schedule, Mr. Ruiz asked what was left to be done in terms of the gas collection system being fully operational. Mr. Mills responded that they are currently working on repairing the liquid extraction component of the gas collection system and that once they restore all the wells, their gas technicians will make certain all the gas concentrations look like they did pre-fire. Mr. Ruiz asked if all the flares were fully operational and all the header lines and Mr. Mills responded yes.

Mr. Ruiz also commented that in the last two months there was an uptick in odor complaints, even compared to last year, and asked if it was related to the Wildfire or to the Landfill accepting waste in the morning. Mr. Mills answered that they are currently evaluating the odor complaints and that the odor complaints post-fire were easily attributed to the Wildfire. There were a couple of construction events that may have led to an increase of odor complaints. For instance, there was a cell-construction event where they had tied a new liner into an existing cell in which they had to expose specific layers of their existing liner system, therefore causing a potential for odors due to opening a previously sealed layer. Mr. Ruiz asked if the NOVs issued by the AQMD in October were due to landfill gas or was trash related. Mr. Mills clarified that the AQMD does not specify whether the complaint is gas or trash in NOVs. Therefore, Republic must do its own evaluation. Mr. Mills noted that in addition to all the gas infrastructure that was knocked out on the City Southside, a big portion of the odor neutralizing emission system, about 1,600 linear feet, melted and that they were able to restore full operation of it late last week.

Mr. Mohajer asked if the Landfill was connected with SCE. Mr. Mills answered yes. Mr. Mills stated power was off for approximately one month and his understanding was that SCE had to replace around 30 to 35 utility poles in order to restore power to the Landfill and the Landfill was operating from generator power during that time. Mr. Mohajer commented for the purpose of the Subcommittee to be aware, that SCE had turned the power off to the Landfill which also impacted the Landfill operation. Mr. Mills stated Sunshine gas producers are connected to the transmission side of things and were connected to SCE.

Mr. Mohajer commented that Chris Coyle of Republic mentioned having to rent one generator and there was only one left to purchase in the state. Ms. Landis commented that at a previous Subcommittee meeting the issue of purchasing a generator was discussed but believes a second one should be purchased. Mr. Wayne Hunter, with the North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens, stated that something Mr. Mills did not note was that during the fire, there were water trucks helping with the fire's destruction including with the artificial turf intermediate cover. Mr. Mohajer suggested to Ms. Landis as Chair that perhaps staff contact Class III landfill operators and acquire copies of their emergency response plans and back collection system to see if they do provide for backup generators and other important issues. Depending on what staff finds out, perhaps the Subcommittee can make a recommendation. Ms. Landis asked staff to provide an update at the next Subcommittee meeting that provides respective Landfill Emergency Plans.

Mr. Mohajer commended Republic for their its work in repairing the Landfill ahead of time, and Ms. Landis also commented how she appreciated Mr. Mills' report detailing specifics on how the Landfill was repaired.

#### **IV. UPDATE ON CHIQUITA CANYON LANDFILL**

Mr. Mazdiyasi provided an update on Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL) for the month of October 2019.

##### Invitation to Facility and Plan Review Subcommittee Monthly Meetings

In October 2019, the Task Force sent a letter to members of the CCL Community Advisory Committee (CCL-CAC) inviting them to attend the Facility and Plan Review Subcommittee monthly meetings. Mr. Justin Wallace, Chair of the CCL-CAC, is present at today's meeting.

##### NOVs Issued to CCL

Staff reached out to AQMD for assistance in compiling and preparing odor complaint records for CCL to report back to the subcommittee. AQMD agreed to provide quarterly updates on odor complaints and NOVs starting January 2020.

In October 2019, CCL received eight odor complaints and zero NOVs from AQMD. The LEA issued one NOV in the month of October due to concentrations of methane gas exceeding 5 percent by volume, at perimeter monitoring well (Probe 13). Throughout this year, the LEA has issued seven NOVs in total to CCL related to methane exceedances at this probe. In the latest LEA inspection report on November 19, 2019, the methane level at Gas Probe 13 is below 5 percent by volume.

Mr. Mohajer asked staff how far the monitoring well, exceeding 5 percent, is away from the first office building. His concern is a potential violation of the building code. Mr. Ruiz stated Public Works will look into the matter. He also mentioned that on the latest report, the subject monitoring well had a reading of zero. Mr. Mohajer requested staff to provide a report at January's meeting regarding whether there are existing monitor wells within 1,000 feet of existing enclosed structures. Mr. Cassulo responded that there are no wells within 1,000 feet.

#### Lawsuit Update

CCL filed a lawsuit challenging the NOV issued by Regional Planning on December 11, 2017. The trial is set for June 25, 2020.

CCL filed a lawsuit on October 20, 2017, challenging 13 conditions of the Conditional Use Permit (CUP). The trial on the CUP conditions will take place on April 23, 2020.

Ms. Landis asked which conditions CCL is challenging. Mr. Ruiz responded that there are two related lawsuits dealing with conditions; one is for operational conditions and the other for fee conditions. Recently, there was an Appeal Court decision agreeing with CCL that they have the right to challenge the operational conditions on the basis that County staff indicated to them, before they accepted the permit conditions, that they could challenge the conditions even if they filed the affidavit accepting the permit conditions. On the basis that a statement was made by County staff, the judge ruled that CCL could proceed with challenging those conditions and the trial will proceed next year.

Mr. Mohajer reiterated that the judge went on the basis that during the permitting process before CCL accepted and signed the CUP, County staff told them they could challenge those conditions. Mr. Mohajer asked how it will affect the CCL expansion activities, and if there would be a hold during the interim. Mr. Ruiz's understanding is that it will not put a hold on the expansion and the courts will hear the arguments of the validity of each of those conditions. Meanwhile, operations and fees are still in place until court's decision.

Mr. Mohajer further commented that the 13 operational conditions in the CUP were put in place to mitigate any negative impacts identified by California Environmental

Quality Act (CEQA) and that from his standpoint, the CUP was issued after the Board certified the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and now if some of the conditions are kicked out, it will impact the validity of the CUP.

Mr. Cassulo commented that there is nothing in the CUP that has not been evaluated and there is nothing being challenged in the CUP that has been evaluated by CEQA. Everything asked for in CEQA and have asked for in the permit has already been evaluated. Mr. Mohajer responded that he suggested the County look at the mitigation measures that are identified in the CEQA documents and if any of those 13 operational conditions were put there because of those mitigations.

Ms. Landis asked Mr. Wallace if he had any comments on behalf of CCL-CAC. Mr. Wallace thanked the subcommittee for the invitation and noted that the CCL-CAC was just established this year and to date, have only had two meetings. There is a lot to learn and both the County and the Landfill have been very supportive.

Mr. Wallace informed that the next CCL-CAC meeting is scheduled in January 2020. Ms. Landis thanked Mr. Wallace for his attendance

## **V. 2018 Countywide Organic Waste Management Plan Annual Report**

Ms. Robinson provided update on the 2018 Countywide Organic Waste Management Plan Annual Report (Plan).

Ms. Robinson provided a preliminary background to the Plan. Public Works brought the Countywide Organic Waste Management Plan to the Subcommittee in September of 2016. The following month, it was brought to the Task Force. After each meeting, the document was sent to both the subcommittee and the Task Force for review and comment. The following year, in May of 2017, Public Works hosted an organic waste management workshop in which all cities were invited to attend a presentation on the findings of the Organics Plan. Approximately 40 cities were represented during this meeting. Public Works sent the document to all cities for review and incorporated any applicable comments received by the Subcommittee, Task Force, and cities into the document. The document was finalized in March 2018 and uploaded to the Solid Waste Information Management System website for public access in April of that year. Staff is currently developing an update to that document, in which organic waste disposal and diversion capacity are analyzed for the next 15 years, with 2018 as the base year. This presentation will provide the updates to the data and analysis for the planning period between 2018 to 2033.

Ms. Robinson continued that pursuant to Assembly Bill 876 (AB 876), every year, counties are required to report to CalRecycle, via their electronic annual reports,

the status of each county's organic waste disposal as well as the organic waste diversion capacity infrastructure.

The initial reporting date for the data required under AB 876 was August 1, 2017. Counties are required to provide responses to questions related to organic waste disposal and diversion capacities. Public Works submitted the data from the 2018 Annual Report on August 1, 2019, in its Electronic Annual Report (EAR). The EAR requires counties to calculate the organic waste diversion capacity needed for the 15th year of a projected 15-year planning period. The materials that counties are required to analyze under the Bill are food waste, green waste, landscape and pruning waste, nonhazardous wood waste, and food-soiled paper waste that is mixed with food waste. The definition is in alignment with the definition in Chapter 12.9 Section 42649.8 of the Public Resources Code (PRC) and in Assembly Bill 1826 (AB 1826).

Mr. Mohajer mentioned the importance of the definition of organic waste in AB 1826, Section 42649.8, which he wrote, compared to the definition of organic waste that CalRecycle has developed in implementing regulations in Senate Bill 1383 (SB 1383). The definitions are completely different. They have expanded the definition of organic waste significantly. Therefore, the Plan is for AB 1826 and not SB 1383.

Mr. Ruiz commented that the beginning of next year, staff will work with the Subcommittee to expand the Plan to include the new SB 1383 regulations. Mr. Mohajer added that it would be very helpful to indicate somewhere the significant difference, noting that SB 1383 is the driver now and AB 1826 is history. Mr. Mohajer also mentioned that we are preparing this according to AB 876, and the amount of organic waste is less than what CalRecycle declares. Discussion of the materials depicted in organic waste ensued.

Ms. Robinson continued with the breakdown of the amount of organic waste that is estimated to have been generated, disposed and diverted by the County in 2018. She advised that the definition of organic waste used in the report is the one used in AB 1826 and not in SB 1383. According to staff's calculations, 6.8 million tons of organic waste was estimated to have been generated in 2018 as defined under AB 1826. Of that amount, 4.2 million tons was estimated to have been disposed.

Mr. Ruiz commented that the 4.2 million tons is a solid number because it comes from the tonnages reported to the landfills.

Ms. Robinson continued with the organic waste capacity within the County in 2018, as defined by CalRecycle; including composting facilities, chipping and grinding facilities and anaerobic/co-digestion digestion facilities. With surveys from respective facilities, it was determined that approximately 216,000 tons a year of unused capacity is available in the County for composting facilities, 312,000 tons

a year for chipping and grinding facilities, and 19,000 tons a year for anaerobic digestion. Mr. Mohajer asked if it was for permitted capacity and Ms. Robinson answered yes.

Ms. Robinson provided a breakdown for out of County facilities. Staff surveyed facility operators located in Kern, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties. It was determined that the available unused capacity outside of the County was approximately 4 million tons a year for composting, 469,000 tons a year for chipping and grinding, and 312,000 tons a year for anaerobic digestion.

Staff compared the disposal to the available capacity. For the base year of the planning period in 2018, staff calculated that approximately 4.2 million tons of organic waste was disposed by the County. If the unused available capacity had been utilized within the County as well as a percentage of available capacity outside of the County, the shortfall could have been reduced.

Ms. Landis asked when talking about the available capacity within the surrounding counties, if those counties had calculated their figures on what they have to do with what they now call organic. Ms. Robinson responded that when staff contacted the facility operators, they did not ask the operators to separate out the capacity that was reserved for that particular county. Since staff knew that the County would more than likely not be able to utilize all of the out-of-county capacity, only a percentage of the available capacity was used in the analysis.

Mr. Mohajer asked in reference to the capacity of 4 million tons permitted, if staff specifically verified that the facility had the necessary permits, considering three months ago CalRecycle was questioned and they said that Southern California has 3.3 million tons excess composting capacity. Mr. Ruiz commented that he does not believe that staff verified that they have all the permits. Mr. Mohajer commented it is important that it is noted the calculations are based on the survey of facility operators.

Mr. Robinson continued with showing graphs of projections and comparisons of material capacities for the next 15 years. Mr. Ruiz commented that the capacities analyzed in the annual report have to be for all of the organic waste that is being disposed. The Annual Report presentation ensued, ending with Ms. Robinson stating that regardless of which scenario we analyze, the County still falls short in providing countywide organic waste capacity.

Mr. Mohajer brought up CCL and commented that it is assumed they will operate a composting facility, which is 600 tons per day. Mr. Ruiz commented 560 tons. Mr. Ruiz stated that one of the operational conditions in the CUP, possible to be challenged, is that the composting facility needs to be enclosed. Ms. Landis commented on the CCL FOC report which listed page after page of what they accepted at the landfill. What she found interesting was that other landfills were

sending their electronic waste; like televisions, washers and other electronics to CCL. She asked if CCL has a good way of dealing with those items and wondering why Waste Management and Republic send their electronic waste to the landfill. Mr. Cassulo believes the electronic waste it is coming from haulers and not other landfills. CCL collects garbage from Waste Management and Republic. What they collect is from the community that they collected and brought to the landfill and CCL separates the waste.

Ms. Robinson stated that CalRecycle is in the process of finalizing the draft regulations for SB 1383, which are expected to be released by January 2020. Staff will then plan to present to the FPRS and Task Force in efforts to develop SB 1383 infrastructure planning. Lastly, Ms. Robinson stated that comments on the annual report are being accepted by Public Works. Ms. Landis stated that she thinks the Subcommittee has had enough comments on the document. Mr. Mohajer added that all of his comments are what he just mentioned during today's meeting.

Mr. Mohajer stated that in the Fall Issue of the Inside Solid Waste Newsletter he would like a half page article published about the composting plan. Mr. Mohajer also asked that the website address be emailed to him. Mr. Ruiz responded yes.

## **VI. COUNTYWIDE INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN 5-YEAR REVIEW 2019 REPORT**

Mr. Sheppard provided a presentation on the 5-Year Review Report of the Los Angeles County Countywide Integrated Waste Management Plan (CIWMP).

The report is done every five years and is reported to CalRecycle. As part of the process, the Task Force reviews the report to see if anything needs to be updated or revised, and to provide comments back to the County.

At the last Task Force meeting there was discussion that with all the changes and impacts of the recycling markets, there may be a need to update the jurisdictional Source Reduction and Recycling Element and other planning documents. CalRecycle advised that one way to accomplish the update is through the annual reporting process, where expansion of programs and additional efforts are reported. At the request of the Task Force, staff has provided for Subcommittee review numerous documents: 2013 and 2017 Source Reduction and Recycling Element Annual Reports from unincorporated Los Angeles County, Los Angeles Regional Agency and all the other cities in the county; 2013 and 2017 Los Angeles County CIWMP Annual Reports; Source Reduction and Recycling Element, Household Hazardous Waste Element, and Non-Disposal Facility Element of the unincorporated Los Angeles County; and Los Angeles County Countywide Siting Element and Summary Plan. The Subcommittee will submit their review of the 5-Year CIWMP Review Report to the Task Force. After receiving final comments by the Task Force, the County will submit the report to CalRecycle.

Mr. Ruiz commented that the role of County staff is to summarize and review the information from the annual reports of the planning documents. From the Task Force discussion last month, County staff were instructed to examine the reports more thoroughly. Ms. Landis commented that since cities handled some facets of solid waste management differently than others due to not having sources or businesses within their jurisdiction to handle some waste streams, that County staff create a report to summarize the variety of methods cities are using to handle the different waste streams. Mr. Ruiz replied that cities have their own situations, needs, and objectives, and may be protective of managing their programs at their own discretion rather than having regional agencies analyze from the outside with intention to assist which may hurt their current ongoing efforts. Ms. Landis continues to recommend that County staff analyze the waste streams of cities and create a report to show how the County as a whole disposes and diverts their waste.

Mr. Shammass asked if this 5-Year CIWMP Review Report allows for preparation in finalizing the next CIWMP Annual Report, where more detail may be included. Mr. Ruiz responded that the 5-Year CIWMP Review Report takes a close look at the types and status of programs jurisdictions have implemented, and their current challenges to determine whether the Siting Element or Summary Plan need to be revised. Ms. Landis thinks the Summary Plan needs to be changed in the future due to the current State definition of waste and view of the current State legislature on waste. Mr. Ruiz explained that because of the time and effort it takes to prepare and amend the planning documents, such as the Source Reduction and Recycling Element, CalRecycle traditionally has jurisdictions utilize the Annual Report process as a means to update their planning documents. There are a number of new laws and regulations regarding organic waste diversion, where Counties in coordination with Cities are to develop regionwide plans to complement the Countywide Summary Plan. The preparation of these regionwide plans may address these concerns. Ms. Landis still wants to analyze SRRE Annual Reports of city jurisdictions within the county due to her view of a lack of detail to support the conclusions reported on this 5-Year CIWMP Review Report.

In closing of the meeting, Ms. Landis made a motion that the Subcommittee not have a meeting in December and Mr. Mohajer seconded. Motion unanimously passed.

## **VII. DISCUSSION OF FOC REPORTS**

Due to time constraint, no report was given.

## **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

No Public Comment.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 12:55 p.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, January 16, 2019, at 11:00 a.m., in Conference Room B of Public Works Headquarters.