

7.4 SOLID WASTE

This section evaluates the environmental impacts from solid waste by implementing the proposed City of Fortuna General Plan 2030 (proposed plan), including whether the proposed plan will: (1) be served by a landfill with adequate capacity to meet the needs of projected growth; and (2) comply with state-mandated solid waste diversion requirements (e.g., AB 939). See Section 8.4 of this PEIR for analysis of the hazardous waste impacts of the proposed plan.

This section is based, in part, on the City of Fortuna Background Report, Section 7.5, Solid Waste (Mintier & Associates, 2007). The Background Report is included as Appendix G of this PEIR.

For purposes of this analysis “solid waste” is defined as any unwanted or discarded material that is not a liquid or a gas. It includes organic wastes, paper products, metals, glass, plastics, cloth, brick, rock, soil, leather, rubber, yard wastes, and wood, but does not include sewage and hazardous materials (Planwest Partners, 2000).

For purposes of this analysis “recycle” or “recycling” is defined as the process of collecting, sorting, cleansing, treating, and reconstituting materials that would otherwise become solid waste, and returning them to the economic mainstream in the form of raw material for new, reused, or reconstituted products which meet the quality standards necessary to be used in the marketplace. Recycling does not include transformation, as defined in Section 40201 (California Public Resources Code Section 40100-40201 - Definitions).

Environmental Setting

Solid Waste

The City of Fortuna contracts with Eel River Disposal and Resource Recovery Inc. (ERD) for municipal solid waste collection services. Residents in unincorporated portions of the Planning Area may contract on an individual basis with ERD for curbside pickup and/or may self-haul their solid waste to the ERD transfer station located at 965 Riverwalk Drive in Fortuna. ERD offers residents weekly garbage pickup and curbside recycling of paper, cardboard, plastic, glass, and metal every two weeks.

ERD manages a waste transfer station on Riverwalk Drive within the Planning Area. The transfer station was established in 1999 and handles waste from the cities of Fortuna, Ferndale, Rio Dell, and unincorporated areas of southern Humboldt County. The combined waste from these communities comprises approximately 15 percent of the county-wide waste stream (Planwest Partners, 2000). Currently, ERD sends its waste to the Anderson Landfill in Shasta County (CalRecycle, 2009). The landfill has an existing permitted capacity of 16.0 million cubic yards, an existing used capacity of approximately 8.0 million cubic yards, and an existing remaining capacity of approximately 8.0 million cubic yards (e.g., at approximately 50% of capacity; CalRecycle 2008).

According to the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CalRecycle), the City of Fortuna generated 8,281 tons of solid waste in 2008 (CalRecycle, 2009). Based on the amount of solid waste generated and the City's existing population of 11,351 (DOF, 2009), the existing per capita solid waste generation rate in the City is 0.73 tons per year (tpy).

Recycling

The City of Fortuna has a number of programs designed to achieve waste diversion targets, including curbside recycling pickup, single stream recycling pickup, and subsidized composting containers. The City's Department of Environmental Services' website lists recycling programs, and identifies resources for household, commercial, construction, and hazardous waste materials disposal, in an effort to improve waste diversion rates.

In 2000, the City reported a 34% waste diversion rate; less than the State-mandated 50% diversion target to be met by January 2000 in accordance with AB 939 (Mintier & Associates, 2007). On September 17, 2002, based on previous diversion rates, CalRecycle imposed a Compliance Order on the City. The Order contained specific requirements for the City, including working with CalRecycle to develop a Local Assistance Plan to develop and implement programs to reduce the volume of waste including the diversion of waste to alternative uses through recycling.

In January 2006, the City implemented a single-stream (all recyclables placed in one bin) recycling program. Recyclables are picked up every two weeks and are sorted at the ERD's waste transfer facility. The City also promotes composting of green waste and sells compost bins at a subsidized rate to Fortuna residents. Up to one-third of all household waste can be composted.

In June 2007, the City in conjunction with ERD, instituted a curbside green waste collection program. Participating residents are provided a 68 gallon green waste container that is collected by ERD once every two weeks. Green waste, including yard clippings, brush, and clean wood, is accepted at a significantly reduced cost. The green waste is transported to the town of Scotia and burned to generate electricity.

CalRecycle has directed the City to develop and adopt a Construction and Demolition (C&D) Diversion Policy. This policy is part of the compliance efforts mandated by AB 939 that the City must implement to avoid further action by CalRecycle. The C&D Diversion policy calls for recycling and reuse of at least 50% of the materials/resources generated by construction and demolition projects that can reasonably be reused or recycled. Compliance with this policy is voluntary for all construction, remodeling, and demolition projects, except those initiated by, or for the benefit of, the City.

Applicable Plans, Policies, Codes and Regulations

State

California's Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939). Adopted in 1989, the California's Integrated Waste Management Act (CIWMA) requires cities and counties to divert 50% of all solid waste from landfills by January 1, 2000 and 70% by January 1, 2015, through source reduction, recycling and composting. To help achieve this, the Act requires that each city and county prepare and submit a Source Reduction and Recycling Element. The CIWMA also established the goal for all California counties to provide at least 15 years of ongoing landfill capacity.

California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act. Adopted in 1991, the California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act requires that the residential, commercial, industrial, and public sectors participate in the diversion of 50% of all solid waste, and that adequate access and areas for solid waste source reduction, including collecting and loading of recyclable materials and composting activities that are compatible with surrounding land uses, be addressed by state and local agencies.

State Regulated Solid Waste. Pursuant to Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 41750 et. seq., each county and city or regional agency is required to prepare and submit to CalRecycle a Integrated Waste Management Plan (Plan) or Regional Agency Integrated Waste Management Plan (RAIWMP). Regulations on content requirements, planning guidelines and procedures for preparing countywide or regional integrated waste management plans are described in Title 14, Chapter 9, Article 8, Sections 18776-18788.

PRC § 41770 also requires that each Plan be reviewed, revised, and submitted to CalRecycle every five years. As part of this five-year review, deficiencies in the individual planning documents must be corrected and revised as necessary and the source reduction and recycling requirements established under PRC section 41780 must be complied with. The five-year review process and report content requirements are further explained in Title 14, CCR Section 18788. The City of Fortuna is required to comply with the State regulations regarding solid waste management plans, including reporting, review, amendment, and content requirements. The City of Fortuna is currently updating its Integrated Waste Management Plan.

Methodology

Policy Background

The following policy background is used to assess the solid waste impacts of the proposed plan:

- The City of Fortuna will continue to contract with ERD for solid waste collection and disposal services.
- No new landfills will be opened in Humboldt County thus requiring the continued exportation of solid waste.

- The City will continue to work with CalRecycle to improve the waste diversion rate to achieve compliance with AB 939 requirements. The City will continue and improve waste diversion programs, such as single stream recycling and C&D diversion, in order to make recycling more convenient for residents.

Thresholds of Significance

Impacts to solid waste services will be significant if the proposed plan:

- Is served by a landfill without sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the plan's solid waste disposal needs; or
- Does not comply with mandated solid waste reduction requirements (e.g., AB 939).

Implications of the Draft Land Use Diagram

The analysis of solid waste demand, services, and facilities is based on information provided by CalRecycle and the projected demand on landfills associated with buildout of the proposed plan. Under buildout of the proposed plan, the population within the Planning Area will increase from 11,351 to 24,904 persons. Assuming a per capita solid waste generation rate of 0.73 tpy, annual solid waste generation within the Planning Area at buildout of the proposed plan will be 18,180 tpy. Buildout of the proposed General Plan will also generate additional C&D waste from residential, commercial and industrial demolition and development.

General Plan Policy Response

The proposed General Plan includes the following policies and programs relevant to solid waste collection and disposal.

Policy PFS-6.1 Waste Disposal Reduction. The City shall promote maximum use of solid waste reduction, recycling, composting, and environmentally-safe transformation of wastes and strive for an annual reduction in commercial and industrial waste disposal.

Policy PFS-6.2 Recycled Materials. Where economically feasible, the City shall use recycled materials and products.

Policy PFS-6.3 New Development. The City shall ensure that all new development has appropriate provisions for solid waste storage, handling, and collection.

Policy PFS-6.4 City-County Coordination. The City shall work with the County to eliminate litter and other illegal solid waste disposal practices.

Policy PFS-6.5 Industrial Recycling Facilities. The City shall encourage the development of regional and community-based recycling facilities in industrial areas.

Policy PFS-6.6 Construction Waste Recycling. The City shall require the recycling of

construction waste, to reduce the impact on landfills in accordance with State regulatory requirements.

Program PFS-20. The City shall review its opportunities to contract solid waste and recycling collection services with an appropriate vendor, and prepare a request for proposals for solid waste and recycling services, and complete a vendor selection process.

Program PFS-21. The City shall incorporate a requirement for the recycling of 50 percent of construction waste. This would reduce Fortuna's waste and help the City achieve 70 percent diversion, in accordance with AB 939 requirements.

Program PFS-22. The City shall require that all proposed development projects provide dedicated solid waste, recycling and green waste bins and enclosures and participate in the City's recycling pick-up, green waste pick-up, and composting programs.

Impacts and Mitigation

Impact 7.4-1: Increased Solid Waste Disposal

Proposed General plan implementation will result in increased solid waste levels that may exceed available disposal capacity.

Discussion

The City of Fortuna generated 8,281 tons of solid waste in 2008, equal to a per capita solid waste generation rate of 0.73 tpy. Under buildout of the proposed plan, the Planning Area population will increase from 11,351 to 24,904 persons. Applying the per capita rate to this buildout population, under the proposed plan the Planning Area residents will generate an estimated 18,180 tpy of solid waste per year, a 120% increase.

The Anderson Landfill has an existing permitted capacity of 16.0 million cubic yards, existing used capacity of approximately 8.0 million cubic yards, and an existing remaining capacity of approximately 8.0 million cubic yards (e.g. at approximately 50% of capacity; CalRecycle 2008). According to ERD, the current solid waste service provider, there is sufficient capacity at the Anderson Landfill to dispose of the additional solid waste that would be generated under full buildout under the proposed General Plan (O'Neill, 2007). Therefore, the project will be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs, and a less-than-significant impact would occur.

Determination of Level of Significance

Less-Than-Significant

Mitigation

No mitigation necessary

Impact 7.4-2: Non-Compliance with Mandated Solid Waste Reduction Requirements

Implementation of the Proposed General plan could result in noncompliance with the solid waste diversion requirements of AB 939.

Discussion

AB 939 requires cities to reduce their solid waste streams 50% by 2000 and 70% by 2015. The City of Fortuna has been implementing recycling, green waste, and composting programs under a CALRECYCLE Compliance Order Local Assistance Plan and C&D Diversion Policy in an effort to meet AB 939 diversion targets. To date, the City has not meet the 2000 compliance target of a 50% reduction in its solid waste stream (i.e., the City reported a 34% waste diversion rate in 2007).

Under buildout of the proposed plan, solid waste generation in the City will increase to 18,180 tpy (i.e., a 120% increase over the City's 2008 solid waste generation of 8,281 tpy). This increase will exacerbate the City's lack of achievement in meeting AB 939 solid waste diversion targets.

The proposed plan contains policies and programs designed to reduce, recycle, and re-use solid waste generated in the City.

- Policy PFS-6.3 and Program PFS-22 require new development to have facilities for solid waste storage, handling, and collection pickup and to participate in the City's solid waste reduction programs;
- Policy PFS-6.4 requires coordination between the City and Humboldt County to eliminate litter and other illegal solid waste disposal practices;
- Policy PFS-6.6 and Program PFS-20 require the recycling of construction waste.

These requirements will be added to existing waste diversion programs required by CALRECYCLE in the City's Local Assistance Plan (e.g., curbside recycling, green waste diversion and composting programs, and C&D Diversion Policy for construction waste). Because the Local Assistance Plan has been formulated to allow the City to eventually meet AB 393 waste stream diversion targets, and because the policies and programs identified above will require new development to participate in the City's Local Assistance Plan waste diversion programs, implementing the proposed General Plan can be done in compliance with the solid waste diversion requirements of AB 939. Therefore, a less-than-significant impact will occur.

Determination of Level of Significance

Less-Than-Significant

Mitigation

No mitigation necessary

References Cited

California Department of Finance (DOF). 2009. E-1 City/County Population Estimates Report. URL: <http://www.dof.ca.gov/research/demographic/reports/estimates/e-1/2008-09>. Accessed September 2, 2009.

California Integrated Waste Management Board (CALRECYCLE). 1999. Samoa Town Master Plan MEIR (2006).

--. 2009. URL: <http://CalRecycle.ca.gov/profiles/juris/>. Accessed September 2, 2009.

City of Fortuna. 2007. City of Fortuna General Plan Background Report.

Eel River Disposal and Resource Recovery (ERD). 2009. URL: <http://www.eelriverdisposal.com/>

--. 2009. Personal communication with Debbie O'Neil of ERD. August 20.

Humboldt Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo). 2007. City of Fortuna Municipal Service Review (MSR).

Mintier and Associates. 2007. City of Fortuna Background Report.

Mintier & Associates, 2007. City of Fortuna General Plan Background Report.

Planwest Partners. 2000. Humboldt Waste Transfer Station Environmental Impact Report. SCH #98122049