



September 1, 2023

Governor Gavin Newsom
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, California 95814

Dear Governor Newsom,

Especially in light of the impact of Hurricane Hilary, we are writing to update you regarding the project to rehabilitate and expand the South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant (SBIWTP) in San Ysidro. The plant's expansion, combined with parallel short-term sanitation infrastructure projects in Mexico, will reduce the cross-border wastewater flows into the United States in the Tijuana-San Diego area.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) currently has \$300 million in funds dedicated to the project. After expenditures on environmental reviews and other pre-design efforts, \$290 million remains from the \$300 million congressional USMCA appropriation in 2020. Additional funding is anticipated from EPA's Region 9 under the Border Water Infrastructure Program and from the U.S. Section of the International Boundary and Water Commission (USIBWC) Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 construction account appropriation.

With the anticipated funding (approximately \$350 million), USIBWC will initiate phased design and construction to eventually double the treatment plant's capacity from its current capacity of 25 million gallons/day (MGD) to 50 MGD. This will require sustained annual appropriations to be sought through the budget process in FY 2025 and FY 2026 for the project to incrementally increase the capacity to the total 50 MGD capacity. As the project progresses, the Administration will evaluate and pursue additional improvements through the budget process and subject to the availability of appropriations. Each Agency will continue to work with Congressional appropriators for any additional funding needs.

EPA, U.S. Department of State (State), and USIBWC are working to ensure the earliest possible completion of the rehabilitation and expansion project. USIBWC is benefiting from the contracting expertise of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to expedite timelines, using innovative methods that emphasize early contractor involvement in the planning process, and coordination between the plant's design and construction contractors.

USIBWC expects to solicit a contract for the design of the rehabilitation/expansion project this Fall. Design and preconstruction services will begin in 2024. Under a second contract for construction, some construction may occur as early as 2024, but no later than 2025. In Mexico, based primarily on agreements negotiated by USIBWC, State, and EPA, other sanitation infrastructure projects will be completed well before the South Bay plant expansion.

In November, the Mexican government expects to finish the repair of a major wastewater pipeline. Its inoperability has added substantially to the excess flows reaching SBIWTP and the Tijuana River over the last year. In addition, EPA and the Mexican government are completing jointly financed repairs of major wastewater collectors in Tijuana. In October, the Mexican government expects to solicit a contract for the construction of a major new wastewater treatment plant on the Pacific Coast at San Antonio de los Buenos. The new plant, with a capacity to treat 18 MGD, will greatly reduce the volumes of untreated wastewater discharged into the ocean in Mexico and reaching San Diego area beaches when ocean currents drift northward.

We hope this information is helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any concerns or questions.

Sincerely,



Radhika Fox
Assistant Administrator
Office of Water



Dr. Maria-Elena Giner
Commissioner
International Boundary and Water Commission

cc:

Congressman Vargas
Congressman Peters
Congressman Issa
Congresswoman Jacobs
Congressman Jacobs
Chairwoman Vargas
Mayor Aguirre
Mayor Arapostathis
Mayor Bailey
Mayor Blackburn
Mayor Franklin
Mayor Gloria
Mayor Heebner
Mayor Jones
Mayor Kranz
Mayor Martinez
Mayor McCann
Mayor Minto
Mayor Morrison
Mayor Sanchez
Mayor Vasquez
Mayor Vaus
Mayor Wells
Mayor White