

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

May 20, 2021

WEB CONFERENCE

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

SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Betsy 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:

Wayne Nastri, South Coast Air Quality Management District
Reina Pereira, City of Los Angeles

OTHERS PRESENT:

Steve Cassulo, Waste Connections
Coby Skye, Los Angeles County Public Works
Gabriel Esparza, Los Angeles County Public Works
Wayde Hunter, North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens
Andrew Kim, Los Angeles County Public Works
Dennis Montano, Republic Services, Inc.
Dave Nguyen, Los Angeles County Public Works
Carol Oyola, Los Angeles County Public Works
Coby Skye, Los Angeles County Public Works
Sarah Solomon, Los Angeles County Public Works
Vu Truong, Los Angeles County Public Works
Daniel Wibisono, Los Angeles County Public Works
Jeffrey Zhu, Los Angeles County Public Works

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Betsey Landis called the meeting to order at 11:02 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF APRIL 15, 2021 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Mike Mohajer made a motion to approve the minutes, as corrected, and Mr. Sam Shammass seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

III. UPDATE ON SUNSHINE CANYON CITY/COUNTY LANDFILL

Quarterly Vegetation Update

Ms. Sarah Solomon, staff to the Task Force, provided an update on the First Quarter 2021 Vegetation Project Status Report for Sunshine Canyon Landfill (SCL) dated April 30, 2021.

During the First Quarter of 2021, a weeding strategy was implemented to remove invasive weeds. The listed weed species targeted for removal include Russian Thistle, Wild Oat, Short pod Mustard, Brome Grass, False Barley, Tree Tobacco, and Yellow Star Thistle. Additionally, vegetation activities included vegetation of interim and permanent slopes, and activities were conducted for the on-site sage mitigation areas.

City Side – Deck C / Lower Deck

- Regrowth has continued to occur, including natives such as California Sunflower, Saltbush, and Horseweed.
- Species from the original seed mix are continuing to sprout up and include Scarlet Bugler, Telegraph Weed, and Monkey Flower.
- Weeding efforts has reduced the cover of the noxious non-native annual species and there has been an abundance of Ventura CSS species germinating and crown-sprouting, including Purple Sage and Coast Sunflower.

City Side – Deck B / Middle Deck

- There is evidence of desiccation of native seedlings species that have recently spouted and are beginning to harden off and defoliate. The weed cover is low-to-moderate.
- Much plant diversity is observed, many of the species in the seed mix have germinated, and the containerized plants are blooming which include the White Sage, and Mexican Elderberry.
- Large amount of sage scrub that flowered this past Spring has resprouted.

City Side – Deck A / Upper Deck

- As observed during previous springtime events, there is a stand of native California goldfields located in the southern center of the Upper Deck that is notable.
- Vegetation is dominant in this portion of the Upper Deck indicating that the soils in this portion of the deck are suitable for supporting native vegetation.

County Side Sage Mitigation Area

- Native vegetation coverage is good in vegetated areas and dominant species include California buckwheat and California sunflower.
- Due to low pH, high salinity, rocky soils with poor soil structure, and boron toxicity the establishment of vegetation remains problematic and has suppressed the seed germination of native species.

The First Quarter Report provided some updates on replanting of trees such as Coast Live Oaks; however, information is still pending regarding status update on overall replacement of trees or recommendations for replacement of tree tags, as well as a commencement timeline regarding recommendations for the County Sage Mitigation Area.

Odor Complaints

Mr. Vu Truong, staff to the Task Force, provided an update on the odor complaints from the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) for the month of April 2021 ([Link](#)).

- During the month of April 2021, 22 complaints were made to the AQMD hotline. Of those, 7 were classified as trash, 4 were listed as landfill gas, 6 were listed as None, which meant the inspector visited the site and did not detect any odor, and the rest were listed as No Field Response
- Compared to March 2021, the number of complaints received in April 2021 increased from 3 to 22 complaints.
- Compared to April 2020, the number of complaints for April 2021 decreased from 33 to 22 complaints.
- As of May 5, 2021, AQMD issued 1 Notice of Violation (NOV) related to odor for the month of April 2021.
- According to the AQMD report, the total number of complaints received during 2021 is 42.

Discussed Item not on Meeting Agenda

Mr. Wayne Hunter of the North Valley Coalition of Concerned Citizens raised the issue of SCL not doing load checks. He noted that Republic Services (Republic)

had ceased performing physical load checking and had resorted to visual load checking due to COVID-19. Mr. Hunter recommended that Republic's monthly report to the Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) should reflect the change in operation protocol.

Mr. Dennis Montano of Republic confirmed that due to COVID-19 and the safety of their employees, the load checks had stopped and that they were only doing visual inspections. Republic and the LEA are currently in discussions regarding restarting the actual physical inspection work since their inspectors have been vaccinated.

Ms. Shikari Nakagawa-Ota of the LEA commented that load checks did not stop, the program was modified to be visual due to COVID-19 and the safety of employees.

Mr. Hunter continued to voice his concern about no written notice in any documents about load check modifications. Mr. Mohajer concurred with Mr. Hunter that the report submitted by Republic should note all modifications or amendments.

Ms. Landis asked when the load check modification went into effect. Ms. Nakagawa-Ota responded she was not certain when it went into effect, but would provide the information once she discusses with the Project Manager of the SCL-LEA. Mr. Ruiz suggested that sending a letter is not necessary. Since the LEA is part of the Subcommittee, they can look into the issue on having the reports modified to accurately reflect how they are handling load checks and report back to the Subcommittee.

Mr. Montano also commented he would speak with Mr. Chris Coyle of Republic about updating the reports.

Soil Importation

Ms. Solomon provided an update on the soil importation activities at SCL.

- As previously reported, SCL had submitted a soil importation request to Public Works (PW) for review. According to the Landfill, the soil will be used for daily cover and construction of a terminal berm.
- PW met with the Landfill Operator to discuss the request and the operator informed PW that they will be resubmitting a revised request.
- PW has also requested the Landfill to communicate their request to the City of Los Angeles for concurrence.
- To date, PW has not received a revised resubmittal. Once received, staff will review under the authority granted to PW in the Conditional Use Permit (CUP).

Mr. Mohajer mentioned what he heard from Republic at the last Community Advisory Committee meeting, that they were revising their request and planning on resubmitting to PW. Mr. Ruiz commented it is Republic's responsibility to submit the revised request to PW so it can be processed under the authority granted to PW in the CUP. Mr. Mohajer asked if the limit under the CUP, is still 12,100 tons for disposal and beneficial uses. Mr. Ruiz confirmed.

V. DISCUSSION ON FINDING OF CONFORMANCE REPORTS

Mr. Daniel Wibisono, staff to the Task Force, gave an update on the Finding of Conformance (FOC) reports for this period. The results reflect the incoming waste stream during the one-week period when the study was conducted. It is not a representative of the entire year or season.

Staff received the 2021 Spring Semi Annual Waste Characterization for Calabasas Landfill dated April 19, 2021. The Waste Characterization Study was conducted over one operating week period, during the week of March 15. The report was disseminated to the Subcommittee on May 13, 2021.

- For this period of study, the Landfill analyzed a sample of the waste stream, which consisted of 5,017 tons out of the total incoming waste.
- Organic materials composed of 55 percent of the total collected sample. Compared to previous study period in Fall 2020, the percentage of organics was reported at 56 percent out of 5,100 tons.
- Other waste including inert solids, household hazardous waste, tires and rubber, and mixed residue composed of 28 percent of the total collected sample. Compared to Fall 2020, the percentage of the waste was reported at 26 percent.
- Plastics composed of 10 percent of the total collected sample. Compared to previous study period of Fall 2020, the percentage of plastics was reported at 11 percent.

Staff received the 2021 Semi Annual Spring Waste Characterization for Chiquita Canyon Landfill (CCL) dated April 19, 2021. The Waste Characterization Study was conducted over one operating week period, during the week of March 15.

- The landfill sampled 38,700 tons out of the total incoming waste.
- Organic materials composed of 71 percent of the total collected sample for this study period. Compared to previous study period of Fall 2020, the percentage of organics was reported at 53 percent out of 36,000 tons.
- Other waste including inert solids, household hazardous waste, and tires and rubber products composed of 11 percent of the total collected sample. Compared to Fall 2020, the percentage of these wastes was reported at 21 percent out of 36,000 tons.

- Metals composed of 9 percent of the total collected sample. Compared to Fall 2020, the percentage of metals was reported at 13 percent.

Staff received the 2021 Semi Annual Spring Waste Characterization for SCL dated April 23, 2021. The Waste Characterization Study was conducted over one operating week period, week of March 15.

- The landfill sampled 47,800 tons out of the total incoming waste.
- Organic materials composed of 75 percent of the total collected sample. Compared to previous study period of Fall 2020, the percentage of organics was reported at 60 percent out of 50,400 tons.
- Other waste including inert solids, household hazardous waste, and tires and rubber products composed of 10 percent of the total collected sample. Compared to Fall 2020, the percentage of the waste was reported at 17 percent.
- Plastics composed of 6 percent of the total collected sample. Compared to Fall 2020, the percentage of plastics was reported at 5 percent.

Staff received the First Quarter 2021 Monitoring Report for CCL dated April 15, 2021.

- CCL disposed of 470,000 tons in the first quarter of 2021. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2020, the disposal tonnage decreased by 12 percent.
- The beneficial reuse material total, including diversion and soil, for the first quarter of 2021 was 130,000 tons. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2020, the beneficial reuse tonnage increased by 35 percent.

Staff received the First Quarter 2021 Monitoring Report for SCL dated April 15, 2021.

- SCL disposed of 630,000 tons in the first quarter of 2021. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2020, the disposal tonnage decreased by 0.2 percent.
- The beneficial reuse material total, including diversion and soil, for the first quarter of 2021 was 24,000 tons. Compared to the fourth quarter of 2020, the beneficial reuse tonnage decreased by 10 percent.

As requested by the Subcommittee at the last meeting, staff reached out to Waste Management requesting the updates on tonnage reports be corrected to one decimal place.

Mr. Mohajer commented that SCL had many odor complaints in March and April and that 75 percent of the materials that were disposed during that one week were organic. He is wondering if there is a correlation between the 75 percent organics received, the week of the waste characterization, and the odor complaints. Mr. Ruiz

stated there were 3 odor complaints in March. Mr. Hunter informed that the landfill received 22 odor complaints in April and 1 Notice of Violation.

V. UPDATE ON CHIQUITA CANYON LANDFILL

Mr. Andrew Kim, staff to the Task Force, gave an update on CCL.

Odor Complaints

- AQMD agreed to provide odor complaint data on a quarterly basis.
- The next quarterly odor complaint update will be presented in July.

Lawsuits Updates

CCL filed two separate lawsuits against the County:

- The first lawsuit was filed on October 20, 2017, challenging operational conditions, and fee conditions of the CUP. In July 2020, the trial court issued a decision finding in the County's favor on some conditions and in CCL's favor on other conditions. The parties are currently engaged in settlement discussions.
- The second lawsuit was filed on April 13, 2018, challenging a decision by the hearing officer that upheld an NOV issued by the Department of Regional Planning (Regional Planning) on December 11, 2017, for failure to pay Bridge and Thoroughfare Fee, accepting prohibited auto shredder waste, and failure to pay out-of-area fees. The trial is scheduled for the Fall 2021.

NOVs for Non-Compliance with the CUP

- Regional Planning issued 4 NOVs issued for CUP Conditions 68, 77, 79, and 113 to Waste Connections on June 11, 2020, at the request of Public Works.
- CCL filed its appeal on August 6, 2020. The hearing was postponed and rescheduled for June 22, 2021.

Task Force request to CCL regarding the June 11, 2020 NOV issued by Regional Planning

- On April 19, 2021, the Task Force sent a letter to CCL regarding the NOV issued by Regional Planning. The letter encouraged CCL to:
 - Work with regulatory agencies to get back into compliance with the Landfill's respective permits.
 - Submit monthly updates on the status of NOVs until they are cleared by Regional Planning.
 - The first monthly NOV update was due on May 1, 2021.

- In response to the April 19, 2021 Task Force letter, CCL submitted the first monthly update on April 30, 2021, which was inadvertently not disseminated but was e-mailed to the Subcommittee yesterday. The letter addressed the April 19, 2021 letter's requirements as follows:
 - Regarding working with regulatory agencies to comply with its permits, CCL is currently in negotiations with the County for Conditions 68, 77, 79. CCL has tried to resolve the non-compliance with Condition 113 by submitting information requested by the County on July 10, 2020.
 - Regarding submitting monthly updates on the status of NOVs, CCL complied with this request by submitting the first update on April 30, 2021. CCL also mentioned that it will be providing monthly updates as requested by the Task Force.
 - Regarding compliance with FOC Condition 22, which required the Landfill to provide any NOVs received by permitting agency to the Task Force, CCL has provided copies of the NOVs that were issued to the Landfill in a letter sent on April 12, 2021.

Staff will continue to follow up with CCL monthly for their NOV status update.

Mr. Mohajer stated that the April 12, 2021, letter from CCL had several attachments that were significant to addressing odor problems. It also noted the NOVs that the AQMD issued and the Stipulated Order for Abatement (OA) Agreement that CCL had entered with the AQMD to mitigate the odor problems. He asked if staff to the Task Force are following up with AQMD to see if the goal of the OA has been achieved since the FOC was issued and the California Environmental Quality Act serves as the basis. He requested that staff review and give a report at the next Subcommittee meeting. Mr. Mohajer also requested that the Subcommittee be informed of all notices, public hearings, and Citizen Advisory Committee meetings for CCL.

Mr. Hunter informed that the striping and/or reflectors at the entrance to CCL were difficult to see, and he asked whether the County or CCL had jurisdiction over repairing it. Mr. Mohajer stated CCL was supposed to relocate the entrance within a certain number of months according to the new CUP. Mr. Ruiz informed that one of the reasons that Regional Planning issued the NOVs to CCL was because they did not comply with the timeline established in the CUP, and the timeline of the entrance relocation is one of the things currently under negotiation.

Mr. Mohajer asked if the LEA issued any NOV to CCL. Ms. Nakagawa-Ota responded that the LEA had not issued any violations to CCL, nor does the LEA have the legal authority to enforce air quality issues, such as odors.

Mr. Mohajer commented that in one of the CCL letters received, Public Works as part of the odor mitigation, approved the use of alternative daily cover (ADC).

Mr. Ruiz responded that staff can present a report next month discussing the ADC. However, his understanding is that they may be using something similar to that used at SCL.

Mr. Steve Cassulo of CCL commented that CCL is using the same material being used at SCL. He further explained that the ADC is a plastic film that can be placed over the trash and does not have to be removed in the morning to put trash-to-trash contact for the next day. The ADC decomposes underneath the trash that is placed on the next day. It does not take a lot of space, does not block flow of liquids or gases and is effective for odor control.

VIII. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comment.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 12:50 a.m. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled remotely for Thursday, June 17, 2021, at 11 a.m.