

Tsunami Risk, Sea Level Rise, Cultural Concerns

Tsunami Risk: ADVERSE TSUNAMI IMPACTS RELATED TO THE Draft EIR/EIS'S PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS OF THE BALLONA WETLANDS ECOLOGICAL RESERVE

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Excerpts:

“It is sad that it took 230,000 deaths to get attention that tsunamis are real, are deadly, and can visit with no notice anywhere causing upheaval in catastrophic proportions.”

~ Dr. Laura S. L. Kong, Director, NOAA/NWS, International Tsunami Information Center, referring to the 2004 Sumatra, Indonesia Tsunami.

“Current land elevation readings taken by the U.S. Geological Survey 3D Elevation Program showing that DEIR land elevation maps—maps that the DEIR relies upon when trying to demonstrate the existence of, and also to depict, alleged tsunami damage-immune project areas—significantly misrepresent supposedly inundation-proof land elevations along and near populated designated tsunami evacuation routes within the Project area;”

“There is a clear and significant tsunami hazard (loss of life and property damage) associated with the proposed project due to the positioning of the proposed levees. Especially in a strong near field earthquake, the tsunami waves of massive force would move from west to east entering into the opening between the Playa Del Rey bluffs and the proposed levees. **The bluffs and the West Area B levee (south of Culver Blvd.) will act as a funnel/channel, forcing the water into the Culver Blvd corridor, possibly reaching Lincoln Blvd and beyond.**”

“The 20-foot-high Culver Blvd and Fiji Way levees are proposed to replace the existing levees so as to contain increased future downstream flooding from Ballona Creek that the DEIR states will result in part from expected sea rise. Yet, during the predicted 100-year tsunami run-up, **these same proposed levees would significantly increase flooding levels along Culver Blvd and Fiji Way, the only evacuation routes available to some inhabitants, and also increase flooding throughout surrounding neighborhoods.**”

“[T]he DEIR seriously understated the height of the predicted 100-year tsunami flood waters and also significantly overstated the height of existing land elevations throughout the project area. **Clearly, Project Alternatives 1 and 2 would significantly increase the risk of death and destruction throughout the western end of the Ballona Valley.**”



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Sea Level Rise:

“When is the last time you heard of a project that was planning for sea level rise by digging lower than the current sea level?” *Dr. Margot Griswold*

One of the benefits of the land acquisition that the State undertook in 2003 is that there is upland area included in what is now the Ballona Wetlands Ecological Reserve. The higher elevation land will help protect surrounding residential and business areas when sea level rises.

In fact, a March 13, 2019 LA Times article, titled “*Destruction from sea level rise in California could exceed worst wildfires and earthquakes, new research shows,*” puts this risk in context:

“The vulnerabilities from sea level rise combined with storms, both extreme and annual, are particularly evident in areas like Alamitos Bay in Long Beach, Del Mar in San Diego County and other cities built on top of former marshes, near river mouths or in low-lying areas. Entire blocks of homes, parks and public facilities could be flooded under such projections.”

The Ballona Creek levees currently protect much of the ecological reserve from whatever impacts might otherwise be endured due to sea level rise. These levees protect freshwater and brackish wetland areas, as well as seasonal ponds, wet meadows, sand dune and coastal scrub habitats from potential sea level rise impacts.

Cultural Concerns

California Cultural Resources Preservation Alliance, Inc. An alliance of American Indian and scientific communities working for the preservation of archaeological sites and other cultural resources:

“We are writing to express our strong opposition to all the alternatives presented in this DEIS/DEIR except for Alternative 4, which does not include the massive bulldozing that would destroy natural habitat and significant archaeological resources. Impacts to four historical resources including one prehistoric archaeological district and one prehistoric archaeological site with known burials are not acceptable.”

