

Hidden Hills Project – Environmental Health Concerns

January 2013

When initially proposed, it was not felt that significant impact to the Inyo County Environmental Health Services Department (EH) would occur. This was mainly due to the assumption that the workforce of approximately 1,000 persons would be coming from the Las Vegas area. At this time, more facts have been provided, and it is now assumed that the workforce will be in excess of 2,000, and they will be coming from the San Bernardino area. This changes the potential impact to EH resources. It should be noted that all comments below are for the thirty month construction period, and that once the facility is constructed and operating, no additional impact to EH is anticipated. Considerations:

- With San Bernardino as the “home base” it is assumed that many of the workforce will try to reside during the work week in the nearby towns of Shoshone and Tecopa. It is still assumed that Pahrump will accommodate the majority of the workforce.
- Existing housing accommodations and RV resorts may be at capacity for the entire thirty month construction period.
- These facilities have never, in recent history, been at full capacity for this length of time, and it not known how EH related resources such as water supply, sewage disposal, solid waste disposal, and food accommodations will be impacted.
- Recently, well development pumping for new wells have, on at least two occasions, negatively impacted water supplies in the town of Tecopa. This raises concerns regarding the overall aquifer potential to serve the town at capacity for extended periods.
- Existing facilities may be tempted to operate in exceedence of their permit conditions, and illegal camping may occur in the surrounding areas. Both of these conditions would result in enforcement activities beyond the norm for both EH, and ultimately the DA’s office and the Sheriff’s dept.
- New facilities may arise in response to expected new business opportunities. These may include restaurants and bars, and of most significance, the reopening of an old RV park owned by John Zellhoefer. This facility has, many years ago, accommodated up to several hundred campsites. It is unknown how many sites Mr Zellhoefer may want to place back in operation, or whether he intends to provide hookups such as water, sewer and electricity. If greater than 200 sites, the water system would be permitted by the State of CA, and if under 200 connections, by this office. Sewage disposal may be regulated by either the State or the county, if the State defers. Similarly, the entire RV park may be permitted by State HCD, or, once again, if they defer, by Inyo County. This would mainly be a Building Dept. function. If Mr Zellhoefer decides not to provide

water/sewer hookups the question is where campers will get water for showing, cooking, etc.

- Onsite regulation would include permitting of the water system, septic system, and hazardous materials programs (handling, transporting, generation, disposal, etc).
- Auxiliary retail food accommodations on or near the site, including minimarts, restaurants and mobile food facilities will be permitted and inspected by EH.
- Nuisance complaints would be directed to EH and responded to accordingly.

As demonstrated above, all additional impacts to EH are based on the construction workforce residing in Inyo County. If the workforce should end up in Pahrump, NV, these concerns may not be an issue. This is a worst case scenario, however, and I do not believe anyone can guarantee at this time that the Inyo County towns will not be negatively impacted as shown.