

Letter from LA County Dept of Public Works, July 15, 2010

Dear Mr. Krall:

Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky asked that we respond to your concerns related to the placement of storm-related sediment at the May Sediment Placement Site (SPS) in Sylmar.

The Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD) started utilizing May SPS in 1963 for the primary purpose of providing a regional deposition site for soil and rock cleaned out of debris protection facilities and reservoirs. LACFCD owns approximately 30 of these SPS sites to handle the regions 150+ debris protection facilities and reservoirs. The Station Fire, the largest fire in Los Angeles County history, accelerated the use of all these facilities.

The burned watersheds of the Station Fire are expected to take five years to recover. During that recovery period, the foothill communities are at the greatest risk due to the potential for large debris flows. After each rainfall event, we attempt to remove the debris captured by our debris protection facilities as quickly as possible in preparation for the next rainfall event. The operation this year required continuous sediment transport to the site. Recognizing the impacts to the community, a redesign of the access and truck routes has been implemented.

Use of the sediment placement sites does not require an environmental document. These sites are exempt pursuant to the State of California's Office of Planning & Research's CEQA Guidelines, Sections 15301, 15269(a), and 15269(c), as well as the Public Resources Code Sections 21084, 21080(b)(3), and 21080(b)(4). Although we are not required to provide environmental reports, we will continue to work with the community by notifying the community of our future operations within May SPS.

The sandbags that you referenced prevent sediment laden runoff from flowing from the perimeter of the site. A much larger system of drainage facilities protects the fill from erosion and ultimately drains to our downstream storm drains.

Supervisor Yaroslavsky's office will be scheduling a meeting with the Neighborhood Council as a follow-up to the May 20, 2010, community meeting. Several Public Works staff will be attending that meeting. We encourage you to attend this meeting to further discuss these issues.

We appreciate your interest in May SPS and for raising these important concerns. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (626) 458-6100.