properties. However, these lands are located within areas already surrounded by urban land uses. As such, there is a high priority to develop these lands prior to developing lands at more remote locations in the Santa Clarita Valley for several reasons: (1) The infrastructure is already present in these areas; and (2) the City and County General Plans emphasize in-filling of such areas within the urbanized portions of the valley in order to prevent scattered and disjunct development of outlying areas.

Development of flood protection features outside the "but for zone" if feasible. Such protection could involve several options: (1) Elevating land development projects above the floodway in accordance with Los Angeles County requirements; or (2) excavating dry land and installing levees and/or bank protection. Hence, the distance of the "but for zone" from the river (105 or more feet) would not represent a constraint on flood protection improvements.

Based on the above considerations, the assumption that the land outside the "but for zone" would be developed with or without the proposed 404 permit is reasonable.

Key Environmental Impacts

The key types of environmental impacts to be addressed in the EIS are listed below:

a. Riparian habitat and wetlands—Future flood control projects could result in the permanent or temporary loss or temporary disturbance of riparian and wetland habitat. The Valencia Master Plan includes the creation and restoration of riparian and wetland habitats along the river to compensate for these losses in other portions of the river. The EIS will assess the loss or gain of these resources over the short term and long term based on their acreages, functions, and values.

b. Threatened and endangered species—Portions of the Santa Clara River support the Federally listed endangered unarmored threespine stickleback fish (*Gasterosteus aculeatus williamsoni*).

In addition, riparian habitat along the river provides potentially suitable habitat for the Federally listed endangered least Bell's vireo (*Vireo belli pusillus*). These species could be affected by loss of wetlands, change in hydrologic conditions, and increased urban runoff. Species Proposed or designated as Candidates for Federal listing will also be addressed in the EIS.

c. Hydraulics, hydrology, and water quality—The EIS will address the effects of bank protection, bridges, and adjacent upland development on the river's hydrology, flood hazard conditions, hydraulic characteristics, sediment transport, and water quality.

d. The EIS will also address impacts of the proposed action (within the scope of analysis) related to air quality, groundwater, recreation, visual resources, noise, traffic, land use, and cultural resources.

Cumulative Impacts

The EIS will address the combined effects of various future flood control facilities and urban development encroaching into the river from Lang Station (7.1 miles upstream of the east end of the project reach) to the Ventura County line 4.1 miles downstream of the west end of the project reach), including major tributaries. The assessment will focus on adverse cumulative impacts to water quality, sediment transport conditions, riparian and wetland habitat, and threatened and endangered species. Other cumulative impacts will also be addressed regarding air quality, groundwater, recreation, visual resources, and cultural resources.

Alternatives

The following alternatives will be addressed in the EIS: (1) No action Alternative—denial of a long-term comprehensive permit and lack of any new Section 404 authorizations allowing future development projects; limited authorizations issued by the Corps would be presumed only for emergency work on existing projects and minimal impact maintenance projects; (2) Full Encroachment Alternative—conventional uniform bank protection according to previous Los Angeles County Public Works Department plans, resulting in encroachment into the river at most locations (which would maximize developable land); (3) Complete Avoidance Alternative-placement of levees and bank protection outside of waters at all locations, avoiding the need for a Corps 404 permit except at bridge and side drain locations; (4) Refined Proposed Project Alternativethe proposed project with revisions to the channel alignment and placement to avoid certain site-specific impacts or highly sensitive areas that will be identified in the EIS impact studies; (5) Other Alternatives—other alternatives identified in the public scoping process that are consistent with the project objectives and do not have other new significant impacts; and (6) Permitting Alternatives—a range of permitting process alternatives, including various combinations of general, nationwide, and individual permits and administrative processes.

Public Involvement

Interested parties are encouraged to be involved in the scoping process by sending written comments concerning the scope of the EIS to the contact

person noted above. Written comments on the NOI are due to Corps Regulatory at the address noted below no later than October 31, 1995.

In addition, a public scoping meeting is scheduled for October 5, 1995, 7:00 pm to 10 pm, at the Valencia Hilton Garden Inn in the Pacific A and B rooms, 27710 The Old Road, Valencia. Interested parties are encouraged to attend.

Richard J. Schubel,

Acting Regulatory Branch.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Office of Environment, Safety and Health

[Notice 96-01]

Continuation of Solicitation for Epidemiology and Other Health Studies Financial Assistance Program

AGENCY: Department of Energy. **ACTION:** Annual notice of continuation of potential availability of grants and cooperative agreements.

SUMMARY: The Office of Health Studies within the Office of Environment, Safety and Health of the Department of Energy (DOE) announces its continuing interest in receiving applications for grants and cooperative agreements for occupational and environmental health studies related to nuclear weapons production, research, development, storage and dismantling and energy production, transmission and use. A final program rule, which specifies the general policies and procedures governing the purpose and scope, program areas, eligibility, application requirements, evaluation criteria, solicitation and selection procedures for the Office of Health Studies financial assistance program, was published in the Federal Register (60 FR 5838) on January 31, 1995, effective March 2, 1995. Proposed research applications and preapplications shall comply with 10 CFR Part 602.

The three offices within the Office of Health Studies, the Office of Epidemiologic Studies, the Office of International Health Studies, and the Office of Occupational Medicine and Medical Surveillance, promote studies to identify and assess the health risks associated with occupational or environmental exposures to ionizing radiation or toxic chemicals in the following populations: Employees of DOE and of DOE contractors