

September 18, 2008

For immediate release

Contact: Sheila Storm or Claire Zucker at (520) 792-1093

PAG amends Water Quality Management Plan to include changes to the Ina Road, Roger Road Wastewater Treatment Facilities

Pima Association of Governments will host two public hearings next week to receive additional comments on changes to the Areawide Water Quality Management Plan, also called the 208 plan.

PAG is the designated agency administering the 208 plan, which is required under Section 208 of the federal Clean Water Act. All new, or significantly changed, wastewater facilities within Pima County must be incorporated into PAG's 208 plan before they can be approved by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality as part of its permitting process.

In May 2008, PAG began a 208 plan amendment process for changes to Pima County's Ina Road Wastewater Reclamation Facility (WRF) and for the new water reclamation campus (WRC) at Roger Road. This 208 amendment is an outcome of the Regional Optimization Master Plan (ROMP) prepared by the Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department in 2007. An extensive collaboration and stakeholder process contributed to the ROMP report and recommendations.

Pima County plans to modify the Ina Road WRF, located at 7101 N. Casa Grande Highway, Tucson, and to expand the capacity of the plant from 37.5 million gallons per day (mgd) to 50 mgd. The treatment technology will be upgraded and the plant will become the central location for biosolids processing. Pima County also will construct a new 32 mgd water reclamation campus (WRC) near Roger Road WRF at 2600 W. Sweetwater Drive, Tucson. This new facility will provide a more flexible, reliable and operator friendly system than the existing facility, which will be decommissioned and demolished after the water reclamation campus is operational.

--MORE--

The total two-plant capacity of 82 mgd will serve the county's municipal treatment needs through the 2030 planning horizon. A new gravity plant interconnect pipeline will be constructed to transport a portion of the wastewater from the Roger Road WRC to Ina Road WRF for treatment.

The Ina Road WRF and the Roger Road WRC will include full aesthetics, noise and odor controls. Effluent disposal will primarily be by reuse through the City of Tucson's reclaimed water system and discharge into the Santa Cruz River. The selected treatment methods ensure that all effluent will meet Class B+ quality standards, as required under state regulations, but the selected treatment technology has a predicted process performance to produce near Class A+ quality water.

As part of PAG's public participation process, PAG, interested parties, numerous stakeholders and PAG's environmental planning committees have already reviewed and provided comment on the 208 plan amendment.

In addition, PAG is providing broader opportunity for public comment by holding two public hearings:

6 p.m., Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2008

Joel D. Valdez Main Public Library
101 N. Stone Avenue, Tucson

6 p.m., Thursday, Sept. 25, 2008

Nanini Branch of the Public Library
7300 N. Shannon Road, Tucson

Written and verbal comments regarding the Ina Road WRF and Roger Road WRC will be accepted until the end of the Sept. 25 public hearing. All hearing proceedings will become part of the permanent record for this project.

To review the 208 plan amendment, which includes a description of the proposed facilities and an assessment of environmental impacts, interested persons can visit PAG's Web site at www.pagnet.org or go to PAG's office (177 N. Church, Suite 405, Tucson) or the Pima County Regional Wastewater Reclamation Department's office on the 8th floor of Pima County Public Works Building (201 N. Stone, Tucson.)

For more information, contact Claire Zucker at (520) 792-1093. Written comments must be submitted to PAG by the close of the Sept. 25 public hearing.

Pima Association of Governments is an association of local, state and tribal governments with a mission to build consensus among its members and the public on regional planning for transportation, air quality and water quality. PAG's staff gathers and analyzes data, provide accurate information, and coordinate an open and cooperative planning process to promote good decision-making for the region.