



# STAFF REPORT

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**Meeting Type:** Board of Directors

**Title:** North Marin Line Stabilization Project Revisions and Supplemental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

**From:** Alex Anaya, Director of Engineering

**Through:** Ben Horenstein, General Manager

**Meeting Date:** December 16, 2025

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**TYPE OF ITEM:**        X        Action                    Information

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve a resolution adopting the Final Supplemental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program for the Revised North Marin Line Stabilization Project, and approving the Revised North Marin Line Stabilization Project; and Direct staff to file a Notice of Determination with the Marin County Clerk and State Clearinghouse

**SUMMARY:** This item was previously reviewed at the November 2025 Planning Committee. The District initiated a project to replace two existing San Geronimo Creek pipeline crossings with seismically resilient pipeline. In April 2016, the District documented replacement of aging pipeline in the North Marin Line Stabilization Project Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (2016 IS/MND), which was published in April 2016 and adopted by District's Board of Directors in June 2016. Since adoption of the 2016 IS/MND, the Project design has been further refined (Revised Project). In the Revised Project, one of the existing creek crossings will be replaced in its existing location with a seismically resilient pipeline, while the other will be decommissioned and replaced by a new pipeline alignment within Sir Francis Drake Boulevard near the community of Lagunitas, and the existing concrete piling pipeline supports will be removed from San Geronimo Creek. These project design refinements proposed in the Revised Project are subject to supplemental California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review and analysis, with the District acting as lead agency.

The Draft Supplemental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) for the Revised Project was released for public review on October 17, 2025, and, following its 30-calendar day review period, was anticipated to close on November 17th, 2025. However, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife requested additional time to review and potentially comment on the proposed Revised Project. Therefore, the public comment period was extended until November 26, 2025. Staff received two public comments during the comment period from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the San Geronimo Valley Planning Group.

The Draft Supplemental IS/MND for the Revised Project documents the determination by the District

that the Project revisions would not have a significant adverse effect on the environment. Preparation of the Supplemental IS/MND does not indicate a decision by the District to proceed with the Revised Project as proposed and does not constitute project approval for purposes of CEQA.

Staff recommends the Board approve a resolution which (1) adopts the Final Supplemental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, (2) approves the Revised North Marin Line Stabilization Project conditioned on compliance with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the Revised Project, and (3) finds that the Revised Project completed in compliance with the MMRP will not result in any significant environmental impacts which have not been mitigated to less than significant.

**DISCUSSION:** The North Marin Line (NML) is a critical raw water transmission pipeline constructed in 1957 to convey water from Kent Lake and Nicasio Reservoir to the San Geronimo Treatment Plant. The two existing NML creek crossings over San Geronimo Creek are free-spanning with minimal supports, which does not align with current seismic standards and practices. The proposed Revised Project would improve seismic resiliency and reliability of this key conveyance facility, addressing two challenging single point of failure locations in the raw water transmission system.

The Revised Project involves replacing one existing creek crossing with a 36-inch welded steel pipeline supported on a single-span steel truss bridge affixed on deep pier foundations outside the creek channel. The second crossing is located in a narrow and challenging location to access requiring this crossing to be decommissioned and replaced with approximately 1,700 feet of new buried pipeline within Sir Francis Drake Boulevard, avoiding future, challenging in-channel maintenance and reducing potential environmental impacts. With the installation of the 1,700 feet of new pipe, the Revised Project will also include relocating and replacing the 1957 (68-year-old) Shafter Valves, which are critical to the District's transmission system and necessary for regulating flow from both Kent and Nicasio Reservoir, which are sources of raw water to the San Geronimo Treatment Plant. This Revised Project presents an opportunity to replace these aging valves and increase system resiliency and install the valves in a more accessible location for future operation and maintenance. Additionally, the existing pipeline over San Geronimo Creek and its associated concrete piling supports will be removed.

The Revised Project will enhance seismic reliability and reduce the potential risk of failure and the need for likely maintenance activities that may cause disturbance to San Geronimo Creek and its riparian habitat. Work areas would be limited to the District's existing easements and previously improved sites, including the Leo T. Cronin parking lot and access road towards Peters Dam. The District is coordinating with regulatory agencies for environmental permits and the County of Marin for an encroachment permit and traffic control. Restricted construction timeframes will also be necessary between August and January to ensure environmental compliance for protected species.

The Draft Supplemental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) was released for public review on October 17, 2025 and remained open through November 26, 2025. Staff received two comments during the comment period from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the San Geronimo Valley Planning Group. Staff reviewed these comments with their consultants and determined that minor revisions to the revised project description and existing mitigation measures would adequately address the issues raised in these comment letters. A response to these comments has been prepared and made part of the Final Supplemental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and these responses have generally been communicated to the commenters.

Staff recommends the Board approve a resolution which adopts the Final Supplemental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, approves the Revised North Marin Line Stabilization Project conditioned on compliance with the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and finds that the Revised Project completed in compliance with the MMRP will not result in any significant environmental impacts which have not been mitigated to less than significant.

Should the Board of Directors approve the Resolution, District staff will file a Notice of Determination for the Revised Project with the Marin County Clerk and the State Clearinghouse within five (5) working days of adoption of this Resolution, which shall constitute Project approval as defined by 14 CCR 15352(a).

**ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:** The District has prepared the Final Supplemental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, pursuant to the provisions of CEQA. A copy of the IS/MND is available on the District's website at

<https://marinwater.org/yourwater/construction-and-infrastructure/capital-projects/north-marin-line-stabilization-project/>.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Funding for this proposed project has been identified and included in the Capital Improvement Budget (FY 26 and FY 27) under the A2A and A1A03 budget categories. This project will span and require multiple years to complete due to the location, complexity and restricted construction windows.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**

1. Resolution adopting a Supplemental Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the revised North Marin Line Stabilization Project and approving the revised North Marin Line Stabilization Project

DEPARTMENT OR DIVISION	DIVISION MANAGER	APPROVED
Engineering	 Alex Anaya Engineering Director	 Ben Horenstein General Manager