

## La Habra Heights requires environmental impact report for oil-drilling proposal

By Mike Sprague, Whittier Daily News  
Tuesday, April 15, 2014

WhittierDailyNews.com

The Whittier Daily News (<http://www.whittierdailynews.com>)

### La Habra Heights requires environmental impact report for oil-drilling proposal

#### City requires review for Matrix oil-drilling plan



LA HABRA HEIGHTS >> City officials have decided to require an environmental impact report for Matrix Oil Company's proposal to resurrect an 18-acre oil field parcel owned by Southern California Gas Company.

As a result, the city will hold a "scoping" meeting from 6 to 8 p.m. today to seek comments on what the report should address, Wright said.

Twelve reports — paid for by Santa Barbara-based Matrix — on the various environmental impacts on the Gas Company property at 2490 Las Palomas Drive have been completed.

Still, a full environmental impact report is needed, said Mary Wright, a contract planner for the city.

"We decided there are a lot of issues here," Wright said. "We want an EIR to make sure the issues are covered."

Wright said the three likely areas of concern are noise, traffic and lighting and glare.

The 12 documents will be used in preparation of the report, she said.

They show possible impacts of noise and damage to streets that would be caused by Matrix's proposal.

The impacts can be mitigated, according to the reports filed with the city.

The environmental report, which will be prepared by BonTerra Psomas of Pasadena is expected to be completed by June or July, Wright said.

Joe Paquette, vice president of operations for Santa Barbara-based Matrix, which had proposed drilling for oil in the Whittier hills, said he's disappointed by the city's decision to have an EIR prepared.

Matrix thought a lesser report, a mitigated negative declaration, that would have been based on the 12 reports was required, Paquette said.

“We didn’t think it was necessary but we’ll abide by the city’s determination that it was necessary,” Paquette said.

“This is a straight-forward reinitiation of an existing oil field,” he said. “Our intention is to use the existing operations there.”

Matrix plans to re-drill three existing wells, in a first test phase, according to the [notice of preparation](#) issued by the city.

If the drilling proves successful, up to 30 wells would be drilled. Permanent facilities to process and transport the recovered oil and gas also would be constructed, according to the notice.

Other needed facilities would include a small office with a rest room supported by a septic tank, a small warehouse, and an employee parking lot.

The second phase also would include the construction of pipelines to transport the oil and gas.

Among the 12 reports, the pavement study by STE of Irvine found that additional overlay of asphalt will be needed on Hacienda Road, West Road and Las Palomas Drive due to the project. Matrix will have to pay its fair share.

The noise study by Hawthorne-based Behrens and Associates found that drilling would exceed noise standards in La Habra and be louder than the existing noise level at nearby Whittier homes.

However, with sound proofing and other measures, La Habra Heights standards can be met, according to the report.

The city of Whittier doesn’t have specific noise standards, but “the noise level will be reduced to a level within 3 decibels of the existing noise level during the (most quiet) nighttime hour at the residential properties within the city of Whittier,” according to the noise study.

The traffic report by Linscott, Law and Greenspan of Costa Mesa studied six intersections near the project and found only one example of an intersection getting worse as a result of additional traffic from the oil project. All of the intersections would remain at a “fair” level of service.

**URL:**

<http://www.whittierdailynews.com/business/20140415/la-habra-heights-requires-environmental-imp>

© 2014 The Whittier Daily News (<http://www.whittierdailynews.com>)