



REGION 9

SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105

March 17, 2026

Mr. Kevin Green
District Manager
Chiquita Canyon, LLC
29201 Henry Mayo Drive
Castaic, CA 91384-2705

RE: Additional Work required under UAO for West Toe Improvements

Dear Kevin Green:

This letter directs Chiquita Canyon, LLC ("CCL") to implement additional work under Paragraph 90 of the Unilateral Administrative Order, EPA Docket No. RCRA 7003-09-2024-0001 and CERCLA 106-09-2024-05, In the Matter of Chiquita Canyon, LLC, issued February 21, 2024 (the "UAO"), by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA"). Paragraph 90 of the UAO allows EPA to direct additional work consistent with the objectives of the UAO.

The overall objectives of the UAO are set forth in Paragraph 1 of the UAO as the performance of response actions to address off-site impacts and ongoing subsurface reactions causing off-site impacts, in connection with the Chiquita Canyon Landfill ("Landfill") in Castaic, California, including identifying, investigating, remedying, and/or preventing the potential endangerment to human health or the environment from activities involving solid and hazardous waste. The objectives of the UAO specifically include the objectives of the Master Work Plan (as defined in the UAO) set forth in Paragraph 22 of the UAO as:

- (1) remedy[ing] and prevent[ing] off-Site impacts caused by odors, emissions, leachate or other waste streams; and
- (2) deploy[ing] measures to delineate, fully characterize, prevent the expansion of, contain, and reduce the smoldering or the subsurface reaction occurring at the Landfill.

A. Additional Work

EPA has determined that the following additional work (“Additional Work”) is necessary to meet the foregoing objectives:

By **September 15, 2026** (unless otherwise stated below):

1. CCL shall make improvements on the west side of the Landfill, adjacent to the prior “West Slope Toe Drain Installation Project.” Such improvements shall include: (i) a soil buttress which is designed and constructed with sufficient height, thickness, extent, compaction, and other criteria to provide adequate support to the west slope to prevent additional slope failure; and (ii) engineered liner, cover, gas control systems, and leachate and other liquids drainage sufficient to prevent the extrusion of leachate, other liquids, or saturated waste, and landfill gas emissions from the west slope, and shall meet the following requirements:
 - a. The engineered liner shall be composite liner which meets specifications of California’s Regulations for Treatment, Storage, Processing, or Disposal of Solid Waste, Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations, Section 20330 [see also Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 258.40]. The engineered liner shall be located on the slope of the soil buttress which abuts the toe of the Landfill and shall be tied in with the existing edge of the bottom liner;
 - b. The geomembrane cover shall have at least 60-mil thickness and include both HDPE and EVOH materials and be installed according to the procedures and specifications in the Removal Action Workplan: Extension of Covered Area Chiquita Canyon Landfill (February 2026), as updated and approved by EPA. Any existing geomembrane cover disturbed over the course of construction shall be replaced with 60-mil geomembrane cover;
 - c. The bottom landfill liner addressed in 2.a, above, shall be seamed to the geomembrane cover addressed in 2.b, above, to prevent the extrusion of leachate, other liquids, or saturated waste from the west slope; and
 - d. Leachate and other liquids drainage shall be designed to provide for the controlled collection and removal of hazardous leachate from the west toe.
2. CCL shall, no later than April 1, 2026, pump any existing stormwater in the south retention basin out of the south retention basin, subject to review of the proposed pumping for compliance with water quality standards by, and approval of, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region. From April 1, 2026, for the duration of the Additional Work, CCL shall maintain the full retention capacity of the south retention basin. In addition, CCL shall, no later than April 1, 2026, stage soil sufficient for constructing a soil dam between the Landfill and the western canyon wall to temporarily contain leachate, consistent with concept for the Soil Dam included in the West Slope Contingency Secondary Containment Plan (September 2024)

Revision v.1.2; provided that, such soil stockpile should be placed further south of the current soil stockpile in order to allow for the improvements described in 1, above, and to allow for containment of potential slope failure at the southmost end of the western toe of the Landfill. Further, CCL shall, within 30 days of the date hereof, submit to EPA revised versions of the West Slope Contingency Secondary Containment Plan (September 2024) Revision v.1.2 and the West Slope Pre-Emptive Secondary Containment Plan (September 2024) Revision v.1.2 (collectively the “West Slope Contingency Plans”), revising the pre-emptive and contingency measures to be undertaken in the event of a catastrophic slope failure of the west slope to conform to the current conditions of the west slope and the planned improvements described in 1, above. The revised West Slope Contingency Plans shall:

- a. provide for the evaluation of slope stability of the west slope and for daily monitoring for slope failure;
- b. clearly describe the factors and conditions that would be considered a catastrophic failure of the west slope;
- c. include a current estimate of the volume of liquid and solid waste within the reaction area of the west slope;
- d. include pre-emptive and contingency measures which provide for a minimum containment capacity upstream of the south retention basin at least equal to the estimated volume of liquid and solid waste within the reaction area of the west slope, which volume shall not be less than 28.1 million gallons;
- e. demonstrate how the locations of the proposed pre-emptive and contingency measures would provide for adequate containment in the event of a catastrophic slope failure at the southmost end of the west toe, which may occur south of the locations of the North Levee and South Levee as contemplated in the current West Slope Contingency Plans;¹
- f. describe how any liquids, solid waste, and contaminated media resulting from a slope failure will be sampled and managed; and
- g. provide measures for the mitigation of fugitive landfill gas emissions and odors resulting from a slope failure.

Upon EPA’s approval of the revised West Slope Contingency Plans, CCL shall immediately implement the pre-emptive measures, and shall implement the contingency measures in the event of a catastrophic slope failure contingency, as set forth in the revised West Slope Contingency Plans.

¹ EPA believes that the North Levee may currently be located in an area too far north on the west toe to provide meaningful containment for a catastrophic slope failure at the southmost end of the west toe, and, therefore, additional levees or other containment measures may be required.

3. To the extent that the improvements described under 1, above, would involve the excavation and disposal of material, CCL shall propose to EPA appropriate disposal locations for the material, including options if the material is hazardous waste under the Resource, Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), California-only hazardous, or not RCRA hazardous waste. At least ten days prior to any excavation work, CCL shall (i) submit to EPA a plan (email is acceptable) for conducting representative sampling of the material to be excavated to determine whether such material is RCRA hazardous or non-RCRA hazardous waste and (ii) conduct such sampling in accordance with an approved sampling plan from EPA and provide such results to EPA. CCL shall dispose of any excavated material according to its proper characterization as RCRA hazardous waste, non-RCRA hazardous waste, or non-hazardous waste.
4. To the extent that the improvements described under 1, above, would disturb the location of existing perimeter gas probes, soil vapor extraction wells, gas collection wells, or other existing infrastructure installed to monitor or mitigate reaction conditions at the landfill, CCL shall re-install such infrastructure at locations acceptable to EPA.
5. To the extent that the improvements described under 1, above, would impact the location of the existing concrete stormwater channel, CCL shall reroute the stormwater channel in a manner that ensures stormwater will not discharge from the Landfill site except from named discharge points in accordance with the NPDES permit for the Landfill.
6. Concurrent with the submission of the initial work plan(s) or subsequent revisions of the work plan(s) for the improvements described under 1, above, and, the submission of the initial work plan(s) or subsequent revisions of the work plan(s) for the relocation of the existing stormwater channel described under 5, above, CCL shall provide a certification of a qualified professional engineer (in the case of relocation of the stormwater channel, a stormwater engineer), certifying the design of the improvements or the stormwater channel, as applicable.
7. Concurrent with the submission of work plan(s) for the improvements described under 1, above, CCL shall submit to EPA a Health and Safety Plan (“HASP”) (or a revision to the ETLF Operations HASP (Version 2.3) October 3, 2025), consistent with Paragraph 25 of the UAO, to address health and safety risks associated with the Additional Work. The HASP for the Additional Work shall provide for a respiratory protection program and for the availability of a rescue team to be located adjacent to the work area during the Additional Work as standby for rescue and emergency assistance and supplied with adequate equipment, including supplied air respirators. The approved health and safety plan for the Additional Work shall be implemented during the Additional Work.
8. To the extent that any of the proposed Additional Work requires obtaining access to property outside of the Landfill, CCL shall use best efforts to obtain an access agreement in accordance with Paragraph 52 of the UAO, provided that, CCL shall use best efforts to obtain an access agreement within ten days of submission of CCL’s Work Plan for the Additional Work, and CCL

shall, within five days of its receipt of a denial of access, submit in writing, a description of its efforts to obtain access.

9. During implementation of the Additional Work, CCL shall take all necessary action to minimize fugitive landfill gas emissions and odors from the west toe area. Such actions shall include, without limitation:
 - a. Utilizing spray foam over any exposed excavation area for temporary odor control while work is in progress;
 - b. Covering any excavation area promptly upon completion of excavation/construction activities at the uncovered area, as well as at the end of each working day;
 - c. Utilizing mister systems and fans; and
 - d. Wrapping any excavated material to be transported by truck from the excavation area.
10. During implementation of the Additional Work, CCL shall conduct air monitoring during any excavation activities at the working face of the excavation and at the downwind property line or other approved locations consistent with the excavation-related air monitoring procedures set forth in the South Coast Air Quality Management District Stipulated Order for Abatement in Case No. 6177-4.
11. During implementation of the Additional Work, CCL shall take all necessary action to minimize the disruption to the gas collection system within the reaction area, including to horizontal collectors beneath the existing geomembrane cover, by moving, tying off, or otherwise modifying the existing gas collection system and to ensure continued gas collection to the maximum extent possible.
12. During implementation of the Additional Work, CCL shall conduct slope stability monitoring for slope movements, bulging, seepage, or other indications of possible slope movements that could affect the safety of personnel and equipment or that could compromise the integrity of the improvements and/or surrounding areas, and CCL shall implement a notification system to ensure immediate protective measures will be implemented.

B. Basis for Determination

EPA has determined that the Additional Work is necessary to meet the objectives of the Master Work Plan and the UAO, based on recent reports of seeping at the western slope of the reaction area and EPA's observations of the west slope during a site visit on March 5, 2026.

In August 2024, CCL commenced a project ("West Slope Toe Drain Installation Project") to address issues occurring at the western slope of the reaction area. A small area of the west slope was previously covered with a temporary scrim liner, above a toe drain that drained leachate to a collection sump at the southerly end of the scrim. The existing toe drain did not span the entire length of the

scrim area and was “susceptible to clogging due to the heavy sediment loading in that area.” An access road was built up along the edge of the scrim to ensure that leachate flowing beneath the liner would not flow into the concrete perimeter channel. See **Enclosure A** and **Enclosure B**. The West Slope Toe Drain Installation Project included installing a toe drain and removing and replacing the temporary scrim liner with 30-mil high-density polyethylene geomembrane cover to “allow for better leachate drainage into the leachate collection system, thus providing relief to minimize leachate seeps occurring along the north and west slope, improve gas collection by having a continuous geosynthetic cover, and allow for stormwater collected on top of the liner to flow directly into the concrete stormwater channel.” CCL completed the West Slope Toe Drain Installation Project in early 2025.

On February 17, 2026, CCL notified EPA that CCL had suspended the operation of certain leachate extraction pumps associated with characteristically hazardous waste groups across the landfill “due to space constraints.” See **Enclosure C**. However, CCL continued to operate pumps above the west slope because that area recently experienced a seep: “Chiquita has kept on the pumps in the perimeter sumps and pumps in the vertical extraction wells above the west slope toe drain sumps that have recently experienced a seep . . . Chiquita kept these particular pumps running because they are the highest priority and will help minimize seeps and other impacts of liquids at the western slope.”

During a site visit on March 5, 2026, EPA observed deteriorating conditions at the southmost end of the western toe of the Landfill where the West Slope Toe Drain Installation Project occurred. EPA observed a “bulging” effect under the geomembrane cover installed during the West Slope Toe Drain Installation Project and leachate draining beneath the cover to a conveyance pipe leading to a leachate collection tank. See **Enclosure D**. CCL explained that the west slope has experienced approximately ten feet of lateral movement in a western direction due to the build-up of waste saturated by leachate under the geomembrane cover. CCL observed that the leachate build-up had been exacerbated by the suspension of operation of leachate extraction pumps since February 15, 2026. CCL also stated that approximately 1 in 6 gallons of the leachate produced by the Landfill over the last year was generated in the sump proximate to the west slope. CCL explained that the welding between the landfill bottom liner and the top geomembrane cover completed during the West Slope Toe Drain Installation Project has been breached in certain areas, leading to the observable leachate seepage beneath the cover. Although CCL assured EPA that the conveyance and leachate tank were operated 24/7, CCL expressed concerns that if there were a discharge of leachate from the Landfill, it would most likely occur via the concrete stormwater channel at the west slope. In addition to causing increased leachate seeps between the geomembrane cover and the liner, the build-up of leachate could cause a failure of the west slope such that saturated material could collapse towards the stormwater channel.

To address the deteriorating conditions at the west slope, CCL proposed to install a soil buttress in the west slope area. The project would include expanding the bottom landfill liner and the geomembrane cover over the top of the buttress and creating a continuous seam between the bottom liner and geomembrane cover to contain liquids and capture landfill gases. Additionally, to control leachate drainage, CCL would install a drainage feature in the buttressed area. Because the work would require expansion into an existing storm channel, CCL would need to relocate the channel and/or redirect stormwater around the East side of the Landfill.

EPA has determined that the Additional Work is critical to re-enforce the work performed for the West Slope Toe Drain Installation Project and prevent a failure of the west slope and potential discharge of hazardous leachate resulting from a slope failure, maintain improved leachate drainage to mitigate leachate seeps along the west toe, prevent the commingling of leachate and groundwater due to tears in the bottom landfill liner, and improve gas collection by having a continuous geosynthetic cover.

The Additional Work, therefore, is necessary to meet the objectives of the Master Work Plan and the UAO, including remedying and preventing off-site impacts caused by odors, emissions, and leachate from the west slope.

Moreover, the Additional Work is necessary to meet the broader objective of the UAO to address the imminent and substantial endangerment to the public health or welfare from the Landfill resulting from the release or threatened release of a hazardous substance.

C. Submittal of Work Plans and Opportunity to Meet and Confer

EPA directs CCL to submit a Work Plan, including an expeditious schedule, for the Additional Work within fifteen (15) days of this letter to EPA for approval, in accordance with Paragraph 90 of the UAO. Concurrent with the submission of the Work Plan for the Additional Work, CCL shall submit a revised detailed written estimate(s), in current dollars, of the cost of hiring a third party to perform the Work, in accordance with Paragraph 77 of the UAO.

Within five (5) days after the receipt of this letter, CCL shall have the opportunity to meet or confer with EPA to discuss the Additional Work.

Pending approval of the Work Plan for the Additional Work by EPA, CCL shall continue, and shall not delay due to the pending approval required by this letter and the UAO, the actions described in 2, 3, 6, 7, and 8, above, and any planning and preparatory work for the actions described in 1, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11 and 12, above (e.g., staging, stockpiling, procurement of materials and equipment). For the avoidance of doubt, such planning and preparatory work shall not include actions that could impact stability of the west slope. CCL shall take into consideration the progress and/or completion of any such ongoing work when preparing its expeditious schedule for the Additional Work. EPA strongly urges CCL to implement a schedule to complete the Additional Work prior to September 15, 2026, as safety and engineering considerations allow. If CCL considers any directive from any other agency as inconsistent with one or more conditions of this Additional Work letter, CCL shall immediately notify EPA requesting a call to resolve the inconsistency. Following approval or modification of the Work Plan for the Additional Work, Respondent shall implement the Work Plan in accordance with the schedule and provisions contained therein, and the Work Plan for the Additional Work shall be incorporated by reference into the UAO.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this letter, or if you wish to exercise the opportunity to meet and confer, please contact Laura Friedli, EPA Attorney Advisor, at (415) 972-3325 or Friedli.Laura@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Amy C. Miller-Bowen, Director
Enforcement and Compliance Assurance Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9

Michael Montgomery, Director
Superfund and Emergency Management Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 9

Enclosures

Enclosure A – West Toe Drain Installation Work Plan (Version 2.0) August 26, 2024

Enclosure B – Summary of West Toe Drain Installation Project

Enclosure C – February 17, 2026, Correspondence

Enclosure D – March 5, 2026, Photographs of West Slope

cc: John Perkey, Waste Connections
Jim Little, Waste Connections
Kurt Shaner, Waste Connections
Dylan Smith, Waste Connections
Sarah Phillips, Waste Connections
Megan Morgan, Beverage & Diamond
Nicole Weinstein, Beverage & Diamond
Allyn Stern, Beverage & Diamond
Alana Mathews, California Environmental Protection Agency
Todd Sax, California Environmental Protection Agency
Sophia Carillo, California Environmental Protection Agency
Karen Gork, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health, acting as the Local Enforcement Agency
Thanne Berg, California Department of Toxic Substances Control
Dylan Clark, California Department of Toxic Substances Control
Zanalee Zmily, California Department of Toxic Substances Control

Enclosure A – West Toe Drain Installation Work Plan (Version 2.0) August 26, 2024

Enclosure B – Summary of West Toe Drain Installation Project

Enclosure C – February 17, 2026, Correspondence

Enclosure D – March 5, 2026, Photographs of West Slope