Notice of Availability

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FOR PUBLIC REVIEW

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
PACIFIC ROCK MINE
Case No. LU10-0003

The County of Ventura, as the designated lead agency, is circulating for public review a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the following proposed project in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Case Number: LU10-0003
Project Name: Pacific Rock Mine
Applicant: Pacific Rock, Inc.
State Clearinghouse Number: 2017081052
Location: 1000 South Howard Road, Camarillo
Assessor Parcel Nos: 234-0-060-220 and 234-0-060-190
Date Application Filed: December 16, 2016

Project Description: The applicant requests a modification to existing Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 3817-3 to amend the current reclamation plan and to allow for the expansion of the existing mining area, to extend the life of the permit for an additional 30-year period, extend the operational days from 6 to 7 days per week. allow construction and mobile mining equipment in outdoor storage areas, operate a concrete and asphalt recycling plant, allow for imported material to be used in reclamation fill and to replace an existing mobile home to be used as a 24-hour security trailer.

The public review period for this DEIR is from December 1, 2020 to January 15, 2021. Based on the analysis presented in the DEIR, the project would result in potentially significant but mitigable impacts to Air Quality, Greenhouse Gasses, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Noise, Water Resources, Hazards and Public Safety, Land Use and Planning and potentially significant but unavoidable impacts to Visual Resources.

The DEIR and all documents referenced in the DEIR are available for public review on-line at https://vcrma.org/divisions/planning (select "CEQA Environmental Review"). The public is encouraged to submit written comments to Justin Bertoline, no later than 5:00 p.m. on **January 15, 2021** to the address listed above. Alternatively, you may e-mail the case planner at justin.bertoline@ventura.org.

By: Dave Ward, AICP, Director
Ventura County Planning Division

POSTED
DEC 01 2020
MARK A. LUNN
Ventura County Clerk and Recorder
By: _____, Deputy

VENTURA COUNTY

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

DRAFT
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NO. 2017081052

VOLUME I – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND MAIN DOCUMENT

NOVEMBER 2020

Lead Agency:
Ventura County Resource Management Agency, Planning Division

Preparer:
Benchmark Resources

VENTURA COUNTY

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

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800 Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009

Preparer:
Benchmark Resources
2515 East Bidwell Street, Folsom, CA 95630

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

µPa	micropascals
ac	acre
AE	Agricultural Exclusive
AFY	acre-feet per year
amsl	above mean sea level
ANFO	ammonium nitrate fuel oil
APN	Assessor's Parcel Number
bi	dark intrusive basaltic rocks
BMPs	Best Management Practices
BRC	BioResources Consultants
Cal/EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CalRecycle	California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CAT	Camarillo Area Transit
CBC	California Building Code
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act
CERS	California Environmental Reporting System
CHP	California Highway Patrol
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
CSD	Camarillo Sanitary District
CUP	Conditional Use Permit
CUPA	Certified Unified Program Agency
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibels
dBA	A-weighted decibels
DMR	Division of Mine Reclamation

DOC	California Department of Conservation
DOT	U.S. Department of Transportation
DTSC	California Department of Toxic Substances Control
DWR	California Department of Water Resources
EHD	Ventura County Environmental Health Division
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
ESA	Environmental Science Associates
FCGMA	Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHRP	Fire Hazard Reduction Program
FIFRA	Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
GSP	Groundwater Sustainability Plan
h:v	horizontal:vertical
HCWC	Habitat Connectivity Wildlife Corridor
HMBP	Hazardous Materials Business Plan
HSWA	Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments Act
Hz	Hertz
in/sec	inches per second
ISAG	Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines
kW	kilowatt
kWh	kilowatt hour
LARWQCB	Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board
LCA	Land Conservation Act
Leq	average/equivalent sound level over period of time
Lmax	maximum sound level during a given period
LoS	line of sight
LOS	level of service
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MMRP	Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
NEC	No Exposure Certification

NOI	Notice of Intent
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
OS	Open Space
OWTS	onsite wastewater treatment system
PCE	passenger car equivalent
PPV	peak particle velocity
PRC	Public Resources Code
PWATD	Ventura County Public Works Agency Transportation Department
RCRA	Resources Conservation and Recovery Act
RMA	Resource Management Agency
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SARA	Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act
SARA Title III	Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know
SB	Senate Bill
SCCIC	South Central Coastal Information Center
SGMA	Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
SMARA	Surface Mining and Reclamation Act
SPCC	Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
Tcvb	dark gray extrusive basalt
Tcvdb	light gray to pinkish gray dacitic breccias
TDS	total dissolved solids
TIS	Transportation Impact Study
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TNM	Traffic Noise Model
TSCA	Toxic Substances Control Act
VCAPCD	Ventura County Air Pollution Control District
VCTC	Ventura County Transportation Commission
VMT	vehicle miles traveled
VRPA	VRPA Technologies, Inc.

WDID	Waste Discharge Identification Number
WWTP	wastewater treatment plant

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that local, regional, and State agencies and special purpose districts prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for any discretionary action that may have the potential to significantly affect the quality of the environment. The Ventura County Resource Management Agency, Planning Division has prepared a Draft EIR describing and evaluating proposed modifications to the Pacific Rock Quarry Conditional Use Permit (CUP) (CUP 3817-3) and Reclamation Plan, described as the proposed "Project" in the Draft EIR, and in this Executive Summary.

DRAFT EIR PUBLIC REVIEW

The Draft EIR is distributed for a 45-day (minimum) period of review and comment by the public, responsible agencies, organizations, and other interested parties. Comments or questions about the EIR should be addressed to:

Justin Bertoline, Senior Planner
Ventura County Resource Management Agency, Planning Division
800 South Victoria Avenue, L# 1740
Ventura, California 93009-1740
Phone: (805) 654-2466
Email: Justin.Bertoline@ventura.org

Copies of the Draft EIR can be reviewed at the following locations:

Ventura County Resources Management Agency
Planning Division
800 South Victoria Avenue, L# 1740
Ventura, California 93009
Contact: Justin Bertoline, Senior Planner

On-line at:
https://vcrma.org/divisions/planning (select "CEQA Environmental Review")

Following the public review period, a Final EIR will be prepared for consideration by County decision makers. The Final EIR will include responses to comments received on the Draft EIR that address the adequacy of the Draft EIR and environmental issues relevant to the Project.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Pacific Rock Quarry is located approximately 1.5 miles east of Lewis Road and approximately two miles south of State Highway 101 off a private road (Howard Road) in unincorporated Ventura County. (See Figure ES-1, "Regional Location" and Figure ES-2, "Site Location."). The physical address for the site is 1000 South Howard Road, Camarillo, California 93012. The existing quarry is located within Assessor's Parcel Number ("APN") 234-0-060-220. Proposed expansion areas are within additional portions of APN 234-0-060-220 and a portion of APN 234-0-060-190. Both parcels are located in Section 8, Township 1 North, Range 20 West, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian.

The parcels and their designations under the County General Plan and zoning are summarized in Table ES-1, "Project Site Parcels and Designations."

Table ES-1. Project Site Parcels and Designations

Assessor's Parcel Number *(APN)*	Area *(acres)*	General Plan Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation
234-0-060-220	241.34	Agricultural (40 Ac. Min.) Open Space (10 Ac. Min.)	Agricultural Exclusive (AE)-40 ac/HCWC
234-0-060-190	476.56	Agricultural (40 Ac. Min.) Open Space (10 Ac. Min.)	Open Space (OS)-160 ac/HCWC

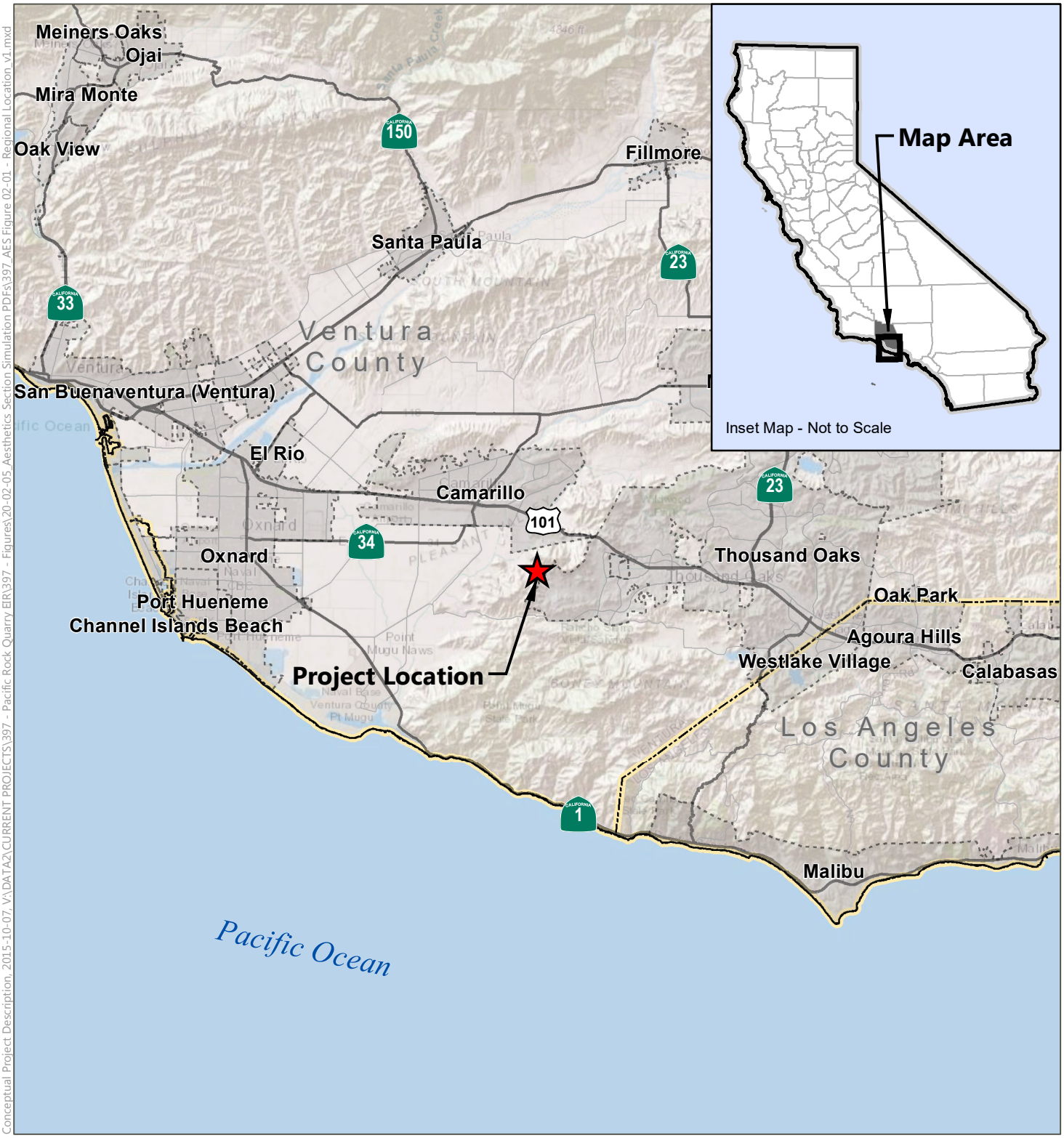
Notes:
1. HCWC component of zoning designation reflects Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridor overlay zoning pursuant to County amendments to zoning ordinance in March 2019.

Quarrying at the Project site began in the late 1800's when Southern Pacific Railroad constructed a spur line to a hillside at the northwest corner of the existing quarry for aggregate production for railroad bed material. The existing hard-rock quarry has been in operation since 1902. The original CUP was granted in 1980 to the L.S. Hawley Corporation. On March 25, 1999, the Ventura County Planning Commission approved a 10-year permit extension (CUP 3817-2) and adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration for the mining operation. In December 2000, Pacific Rock, Inc. acquired the mining operation. On March 23, 2000, the Planning Commission approved a permit modification (CUP 3817-3) and a Reclamation Plan with an open space end use, and a Reclamation Plan Compliance Amendment (RPCA-CUP3817-3) was approved on April 19, 2011 to include the areas where mining occurred outside of the prior mining boundary.

The Project proponent, Pacific Rock, Inc. (referenced herein as the "Applicant" or "Operator") is requesting the approval of a CUP modification to extend the life of the existing permitted operations for an additional 30 years, expand the mining area, extend the operational days from 6 to 7 days per week (adding Sunday for material load out) with additional material load out hours and limited extended 24 hour operations (60 days maximum per year), allow construction and mobile mining equipment in outdoor storage areas, operate a concrete and asphalt recycling plant, allow for imported material to be used in reclamation fill, and replace an existing mobile home to be used as a 24-hour security trailer.

The Applicant is requesting that the County approve a CUP modification to extend the life of the permit and continue to operate on property zoned Open Space (OS-160) and Agricultural Exclusive (AE-40). The existing facility is an active quarry that supplies large rock for the production of rip-rap, various sizes of crushed rock and aggregate to public works and private projects in Ventura County. The request includes expansion of the mining area to the east to address slope conditions at the northerly and northeasterly side of the quarry and expansion onto recently acquired adjacent land. Under the Project, mining methods would continue as under existing operations, including blasting to loosen the hard rock material and various processing methods.

The Applicant is also requesting approval of an amendment to the existing Reclamation Plan to account for the proposed expanded mine area and to amend specifications for reclaimed conditions at the site. The proposed Reclamation Plan amendment specifies end land uses as "open space" on the benched portions, and "agriculture" on the remaining areas, where grasses would be planted for cattle grazing and would also provide for erosion control. The proposed reclamation would also involve import and placement of fill material at the site.



Conceptual Project Description, 2015-10-07, V:\DATA2\CURRENT PROJECTS\397 - Pacific Rock Quarry EIR\397 - Figures\20-02-05_Aesthetics Section Simulation PDFs\397_AES Figure 02-01 - Regional Location_v1.mxd

SOURCES: ESRI World Shaded Relief accessed June 2019, ESRI World Topographic Map accessed June 2019; ESRI World Streetmap, 2009; Adapted by Benchmark Resources in 2019

NOTES: This figure was prepared for land use planning and informational purposes only. The information shown and its accuracy are reflective of the date the data was accessed or produced.

Project Location
City Boundary
County Boundary
Highway
Major Road

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Regional Location
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure ES-1

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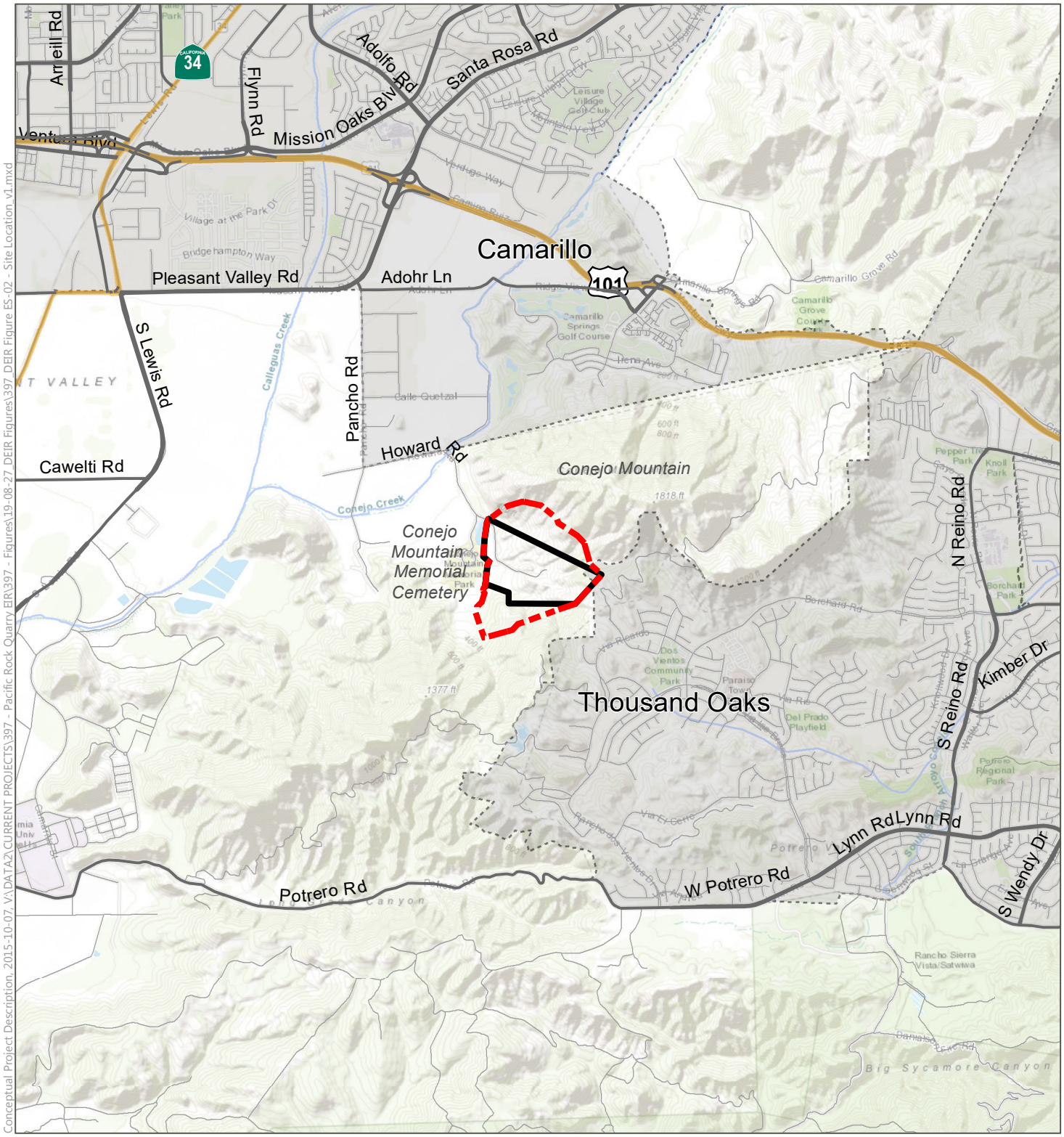

Conceptual Project Description, 2015-10-07, V:\DATA2\CURRENT PROJECTS\397 - Pacific Rock Quarry EIR\397 - Figures\19-08-27_DEIR Figures\397_DEIR Figure ES-02 - Site Location_v1.mxd

SOURCES: ESRI World Shaded Relief accessed June 2019, ESRI World Topographic Map accessed June 2019; ESRI World Streetmap, 2009; Adapted by Benchmark Resources in 2019

NOTES: This figure was prepared for land use planning and informational purposes only. The info shown and its accuracy are refelctive of the date the data was accessed or produced.

- Proposed CUP Boundary
- Existing CUP Boundary
- City Boundary
- Water Body
- Highway
- Major Road
- Street

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 2,000 4,000 8,000 Feet

Site Location

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

Figure ES-2

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Table ES-2, "Comparison of Existing Conditions and Proposed Project," provides a summary comparison of existing conditions and the Project areas and operations.

Table ES-2. Comparison of Existing Conditions and Proposed Project

Mining Facility Component or Activity	Existing	Proposed	Change
CUP Area	111.5 acres	204.4 acres	Increase of 93 acres
Mining Area and Facilities	56.6 acres (mining area) 5.9 acres (facilities) 62.5 acres (total)	172.8 acres (mining and facilities)	Increase of 110.3 acres
Reclamation End Use	Open Space	Open Space and Agriculture	Addition of Agriculture for end use of pad areas
Annual Production	86,000 tons (permitted) 20,900 tons (baseline / 10-year average)	468,000 tons	382,000-ton increase from permitted 447,000-ton increase from baseline
Maximum Production / Shipments Per Operating Day	1,500 tons	1,500 tons	No change
Surface Mining and Processing Methods	Blasting, sorting, processing/crushing, and stockpiling.	Blasting, sorting, processing/crushing, and stockpiling.	No change
Structures and Equipment	Aggregate processing facilities, mobile equipment, bunkers, scale/scalehouse, storage, etc.	Aggregate processing facilities, mobile equipment, bunkers, scale/scalehouse, storage, etc.	No change
Soil Imports/Exports	None	Up to 100,000 cubic yards per year	New component of operations and reclamation
Concrete and Asphalt Recycling	None	Up to 30,000 cubic yards per year	New component of operations
Hours of Operation – Mining Excavation and Processing	Mon. – Sat. 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Mon. – Sat. 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM	No change
Hours of Operation: Water Truck Use, Equipment Fueling; Arrivals and Departures of Aggregate, Recycle, and Soil Haul Trucks	Mon. – Sat. 7AM – 4PM	Mon. – Sun. 4:30AM – 10PM	Add Sundays Add 4:30AM – 7AM Add 4PM – 10PM
Maximum Daily Haul Truck Traffic (combined aggregate, soil, and concrete/asphalt)	120 one-way trips (60 truckloads per day)	120 one-way trips (60 truckloads per day)	No change

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

As stated in the Applicant's Project Description (Sespe, 2019a), the Applicant's primary objectives for the Project are to:

- meet the market demand for rip rap, stone, and aggregate products;
- continue to recover rock and rip rap in a manner that is environmentally responsible and to comply with applicable laws and regulations during material production, while maximizing the utilization of the resource and meeting the financial expectations of the owners;
- mine and process quality rock as aggregate for sale. Provide a reliable and sustainable, local source of high-quality aggregate to help meet the current and long-term demand for construction materials in Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles counties;
- create additional, long-term supply of local aggregate reserves resulting in significantly shorter truck trip distances by reducing the need to haul aggregate from greater distances to meet demand and thereby reducing fuel consumption, air pollution, traffic congestion, road maintenance and the cost of delivery;
- provide an additional local source of construction aggregate with enough annual sales capacity (0.47 million tons) to encourage a healthy competitive market;
- create an environmentally sound project that would balance the recovery of the aggregate resource with the protection of other resources including wildlife habitat, groundwater, surface water, and air quality through environmentally sound and economically viable reclamation of the site in accordance with the approved reclamation plan;
- create a project that will return a significant amount of mined land back to agriculture and open space; and
- create local quality jobs, while also benefiting local downstream businesses and creating an enhanced tax revenue to the county.

EIR SCOPE AND ISSUES EVALUATED

The County prepared and circulated from August 30 through October 2, 2017 a Notice of Preparation (NOP) summarizing the Project and advising of the County's intent to prepare an EIR. Circulation of the NOP including mailings to the owners of parcels within 1,000 feet of the Project site parcels. A total of 80 comment letters and emails were received by the County in response to the NOP. The comments are included in a draft EIR appendix and the issues raised were considered in preparing the draft EIR.

The following environmental resource subject areas are evaluated in detail in the draft EIR:

- Aesthetics / Visual Resources
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Noise and Vibration
- Transportation and Circulation
- Water Resources
- Hazards and Public Safety
- Energy
- Land Use

The following subject areas were eliminated from further consideration and a summary explanation for their elimination is provided in the is provided in in the draft EIR:

- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Utilities
- Coastal Beaches and Sand Dunes
- Sewage Collection/Treatment Facilities

ALTERNATIVES AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

CEQA requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project or to the location of the project site that could feasibly avoid or lessen any significant environmental impacts of the project while attaining most of the project's basic objectives. The Draft EIR considers a range of alternatives and evaluates the following alternatives in detail: No Project Alternative (Alternative A), Reduced Mine Expansion Area (Alternative B), and Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion (Alternative C). Evaluation of the No Project Alternative is required by CEQA and this alternative would result in the least potential for environmental effects as compared to the proposed Project and other alternatives. The No Project Alternative would reclaim the site in accordance with the approved reclamation plan, and no additional mining or processing would be permitted at the site with the exception of mining that may be necessary to produce materials to complete reclamation of the site in accordance with the approved reclamation plan and compliance agreement. The No Project Alternative would not meet the basic Project objectives.

CEQA requires that an EIR identify the environmentally superior alternative, and that if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, the EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative from the remaining alternatives. In consideration of the alternatives evaluated, the No Project Alternative would result in fewer, or no, impacts as compared to the Project and the other alternatives. Excluding the No Project Alternative, Alternative B is considered the environmentally superior alternative. Alternatives B and C would each have the potential to reduce the severity of certain Project impacts. Alternative C would have the potential to reduce air pollutant emissions (including NOx) by reducing onsite activities and offsite hauling as compared to the Project. However, Alternative C would not necessarily reduce NOx emissions to less than significant levels. Furthermore, as discussed previously in this EIR, limiting production at the site is reasonably anticipated to result in a corresponding increase in production and associated air pollutant emissions at other locations in the region. Thus, Alternative C could reduce local air quality impacts compared to the Project, but would not necessarily have a regional air quality benefit.

Alternative B would reduce the potential for visual impacts by reducing the area of disturbance as compared to the Project and would have the potential to avoid the significant and unavoidable Project Impact VIS-1. Although not necessary to address significant and unavoidable impacts, Alternative B would also have the potential to reduce other Project impacts including those related to biological resources, air quality, noise and vibration, and land use. For these reasons, Alternative B, the Reduced Mine Expansion Area alternative, is considered the environmentally superior alternative.

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Table ES-3, "Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures," lists the impacts identified and evaluated in the Draft EIR and provides a summary of recommended mitigation measures for impacts found to be significant or potentially significant. The full text of each recommended mitigation measure is in each resource section of Chapter 3. With the exception of one Project impact, the EIR concludes that the significant and potentially significant impacts of the Project could be reduced to less than significant with

implementation of the identified mitigation. However, even with implementation of mitigation, the following Project impact is considered significant and unavoidable:

- Impact VIS-1: The Project would result in an adverse change to the visual character of the site and surrounding areas.

Table ES-3. Summary of Project Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Summary of Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation
VISUAL RESOURCES			
Impact VIS-1: The Project would result in an adverse change to the visual character of the site and surrounding areas.	Significant	MM VIS-1: 1. Reduce the angular and benched appearance of final mined slopes and promote revegetation of benches and slopes at final reclamation. 2. Implement a landscape screening plan that provides for installation and maintain of vegetative plantings along the western perimeter of the site sufficient to screen views of the site from adjacent areas.	Significant
Impact VIS-2: Project lighting for operations during early morning and evening periods would create the potential for light spill and night sky lighting.	Significant	MM VIS-2: Prepare and submit a lighting plan sufficient to avoid or minimize night-sky lighting and offsite light shine.	Less than Significant
Impact VIS-3: The Project could result in daytime glare.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Contribution to cumulative Visual Resources impacts.	Not Substantial	No additional mitigation required.	Not Substantial
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES			
Impact AG-1: The Project could result in the conversion or otherwise adversely affect Prime Farmland and Unique Farmland.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact AG-2: The Project would continue and expand mining activities in areas subject to a Land Conservation Act contract.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Contribution to cumulative Agriculture or Forestry Resources impacts.	Not Substantial	No additional mitigation required.	Not Substantial

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Summary of Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation
AIR QUALITY AND GREENHOUSE GASES			
Impact AQ-1: Project activities would generate air pollutant emissions that could affect regional air quality.	Significant (NOx emission)	MM AQ-1: Options including limiting aggregate and/or recycle plant operation when quarrying, limiting duration of simultaneous aggregate and recycle plant operations, limiting daily haul truck trips, and/or retrofitting equipment to meet CARB and USEPA Tier 4 off-road emissions standards for onsite equipment and vehicles; each as necessary to ensure net Project NOx emissions do not exceed 25 pounds per day over baseline emissions.	Less than Significant
Impact AQ-2: Project emissions of toxic air contaminants would increase cancer and non-cancer health risk.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact AQ-3: Project greenhouse gas emissions could contribute to global climate change.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact AQ-4: Project operations could generate odors.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact AQ-5: Project activities associated with final site reclamation would result in air pollutant and GHG emissions.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Contribution to cumulative Air Quality or GHG emissions impacts.	Substantial (NOx)	Implement mitigation measure MM AQ-1.	Not Substantial
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Impact BIO-1: Project ground disturbance and mining within proposed expansion areas could directly or indirectly impact nesting birds protected by the MBTA and the California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.	Significant	MM BIO-1: Conduct all land clearing activities in such a way as to avoid nesting native birds.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-2: Project disturbance within proposed expansion areas would result in the loss of special-status plants.	Significant	MM BIO-2: Provide for replacement of impacted special-status plants at a minimum 1:1 ratio within suitable habitat at a site where no future disturbance will occur.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-3(a): Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect	Significant	MM BIO-3(a) Burrowing Owl - Conduct protocol-level burrowing owl surveys following CDFW guidelines and implement a plan for avoidance of occupied burrows in accordance with the requirements approved by CDFW.	Less than Significant

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Summary of Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation
adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. ***Burrowing Owl***			
Impact BIO-3(b): Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. ***San Diego Woodrat***	Significant	MM BIO-3(b) San Diego Woodrat - Survey suitable habitat for woodrats within areas that will be subject to land clearing activities. Postpone land clearing activities within 50 feet of woodrat nests until the end of peak nesting season. If active woodrat nests are present outside of the peak nesting season, relocate the nests according to specified requirements.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-3(c): Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. ***Least Bell's vireo and yellow warbler***	Significant	MM BIO-3(c) Least Bell's vireo and yellow warbler - Implement MM BIO-1.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-3(d): Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. ***Golden Eagle***	Significant	MM BIO-3(d) Golden Eagle - Implement MM BIO-1.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-3(e): Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. ***Coastal California gnatcatcher***	Significant	MM BIO-3(e) Coastal California gnatcatcher - Conduct protocol surveys for coastal California gnatcatcher. If surveys confirm the presence of coastal California gnatcatcher implement protective procedures.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-3(f): Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the	Significant	MM BIO-3(f) Coastal whiptail - Conduct a pre-construction survey for coastal whiptail. If coastal whiptail is identified within the planned disturbance area, the	Less than Significant

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Summary of Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation
loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. ***Coastal whiptail***		Permittee shall consult with and obtain approval from CDFW for relocation of the individuals to a suitable location approved by CDFW.	
Impact BIO-3(g): Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. ***Western pond turtle***	Significant	MM BIO-3(g) Western pond turtle - Conduct a pre-construction survey for western pond turtle. If western pond turtle or potentially occupied burrows are identified within the planned disturbance area. Consult with and obtain approval from CDFW for relocation of the individuals to a suitable location approved by CDFW.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-3(h): Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. ***Crotch bumble bee***	Significant	MM BIO-3(h) Crotch bumble bee - Conduct pre-disturbance surveys and implement mitigation and monitoring plan prepared by qualified biologist.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-3(i): Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. ***Santa Monica grasshopper***	Significant	MM BIO-3(i) Santa Monica grasshopper - Conduct pre-disturbance surveys and implement mitigation and monitoring plan prepared by qualified biologist.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-3(j): Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. ***Mountain lion***	Significant	MM BIO-3(g) Mountain lion MM BIO-3(g)(1): Implement MM BIO-6. MM BIO-3(g)(2): Conduct mountain lion surveys prior to new disturbance and implement avoidance measures if mountain lion is present.	Less than Significant

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Summary of Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation
Impact BIO-4: Ground disturbance associated with mining and reclamation within mine expansion areas could directly and indirectly impact wetlands and waters of the U.S. and/or waters of the State.	Significant	MM BIO-4: Conduct a delineation of federal and state jurisdictional waters that may be present in the Project site and obtain any applicable state and federal regulatory agency approvals required for planned site activities.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-5: Vegetation clearing in mine expansion areas would result in the direct removal of Ventura County Protected Trees.	Significant	MM BIO-5: The Permittee shall comply with the County's Tree Protection Regulations (TPR) set forth in § 8107-25 et seq. of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance and the Tree Protection Guidelines (TPG), through implementation of specified measures.	Less than Significant
Impact BIO-6: Project implementation would directly and indirectly affect wildlife movement opportunities the Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Connection.	Significant	MM BIO-6(a): Minimize light and glare in wildlife migration corridors and/or wildlife habitat Wildlife Corridor or Wildlife Habitat through compliance with specified requirements. MM BIO-6(b): Design fencing for wildlife permeability. MM BIO-6(c): Establish wildlife passage areas.	Less than Significant
CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Impact CR-1: Project-related ground disturbance would have the potential to adversely affect historical and archaeological resources.	Significant	MM CR-1: If any archaeological or historical artifacts are uncovered during ground disturbance or construction activities, implement resource evaluation and proper disposition methods.	Less than Significant
Impact CR-2: Project-related ground disturbance would have the potential to disturb human remains.	Significant	MM CR-2: If any human burial remains are encountered during ground disturbance or construction activities, cease operations and assure the preservation of the area in which the discovery was made, notify the County Coroner and the Planning Director, and implement the agreed upon recommendations.	Less than Significant
Impact CR-3: Project-related ground disturbance and other activities would create the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource(s) if such resource(s) are present within or adjacent to the site.	No Impact	No mitigation required.	No Impact
Contribution to cumulative Cultural Resources impacts.	Not Substantial	No additional mitigation required.	Not Substantial
GEOLOGY AND SOILS			
Impact GS-1: Project-related ground disturbance and other activities would	No Impact	No mitigation required.	No Impact

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Summary of Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation
create the potential for impacts to paleontological resources.			
Impact GS-2: Project excavation could result in unstable slopes.	Significant	MM GS-2(a): Prepare and submit to Ventura County for review and approval geotechnical evaluations for each new area of planned mining. MM GS-2(b): Inspect quarry slopes as determined by County Geologist and implement recommendations by the inspecting engineering geologist or geotechnical engineer.	Less than Significant
Impact GS-3: Placement of fill material for reclamation could create the potential for hazards associated with liquefaction, landslides/mudflow, expansive soils, and subsidence.	Significant	MM GS-3: Monitor and document the receipt of all imported material received at the site and shall prepare and update an engineered fill placement plan as necessary to ensure that all imported fill material is characterized and placed for reclamation in a manner to sufficiently minimize the potential for geologic hazards.	Less than Significant
Impact GS-4: Project ground disturbance and stormwater runoff from disturbed areas could result in increased erosion and loss of topsoil.	Significant	Implement mitigation measure MM WR-3.	Less than Significant
Impact GS-5: The Project septic system would have the potential to be located in areas with soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of the proposed septic system.	Significant	Implement mitigation measure MM HM-3.	Less than Significant
Contribution to cumulative Geology and Soils impacts.	Not Substantial	No additional mitigation required.	Not Substantial
NOISE AND VIBRATION			
Impact NV-1: Onsite mining, processing, and reclamation activities could result in noise levels at residential and noise-sensitive locations that exceed applicable standards.	Significant	MM NV-1: Restrict excavation, materials processing and recycling, and reclamation activities to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.; install and maintain manufacturer's improved exhaust mufflers on excavation and reclamation equipment, limit equipment idling to 30 minutes; prohibit concurrent operation of aggregate and recycle plants; prohibit operation of aggregate and recycle plants when mining within 1,600 feet of Conejo Mountain Funeral Home; and conduct noise monitoring for activities within line-of-sight of Receptors R 1 and R2-B and implement additional measures if needed to avoid exceedance of County noise standards.	Less than Significant

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Summary of Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation
Impact NV-2: Offsite materials hauling could result in noise levels at residential and other noise-sensitive locations that exceed applicable standards.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact NV-3: Project blasting could result in groundborne vibration at residential and other sensitive locations that exceed applicable structural damage or annoyance thresholds.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Contribution to cumulative Noise and Vibration impacts.	Not Substantial	No additional mitigation required.	Not Substantial
TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION			
Impact TC-1: Potential for the Project to contribute to regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT) associated with haul trucks and worker trips.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact TC-2: Potential for the Project to increase transportation-related hazards on public or private roads due to design or incompatible uses.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact TC-3: Potential for the Project to conflict with emergency response or emergency access.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact TC-4: Potential for the Project to conflict with bicycle and pedestrian circulation.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact TC-5: Potential for the Project to conflict with transit operations.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Contribution to cumulative Transportation and Circulation impacts.	Not Substantial	No mitigation required.	Not Substantial

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Summary of Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation
WATER RESOURCES			
Impact WR-1: Project groundwater consumption could affect the quantity of groundwater available at and adjacent to the Project site.	Significant	MM WR-1: Measure and report to the Public Works Agency (PWA) the volume of groundwater extracted. Return to active status or abandon/destroy onsite wells in compliance with County ordinance.	Less than Significant
Impact WR-2: Project mining and reclamation activities would create the potential to adversely affect groundwater and surface water quality.	Significant	MM WR-2(a): Submit a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) to the Environmental Health Division/Certified Unified Program Agency (Ventura CUPA) for storage of hazardous materials above reporting thresholds.	Less than Significant
Impact WR-3: The Project could adversely affect surface water quality due to increased runoff, erosion, siltation, and inadequate stormwater storage capacity.	Significant	MM WR-3: Prepare and submit an engineering grading and drainage plan (drainage plan) for review and approval by the County, and develop and maintain all stormwater facilities as specified in the drainage plan.	Less than Significant
Impact WR-4: The Project's increased use of reclaimed wastewater would reduce the quantity of surface water available for beneficial uses downstream within Conejo Creek and Calleguas Creek.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact WR-5: The Project requires a long-term, reliable source of water.	Significant	MM WR-5(a): Prior to installation of security trailer, provide a water quality and water well pump and recovery test to the County verifying the sufficiency of the 24-hour security trailer water supply. MM WR-5(b): Provide the County with written verification that operations will cease if the minimum amount of water needed for daily operation is not available and until an adequate water supply is reestablished or alternative supply is approved by the County.	Less than Significant
Impact WR-6: The Project must meet fire flow requirements as determined by the Ventura County Waterworks manual or the Ventura County Fire Protection District Fire Code.	Significant	MM WR-6: Design and install sufficient storage and facilities for the provision of water for fire suppression at the site in accordance with specifications and requirements determined by the County.	Less than Significant
Impact WR-7: The Project could release pollutants, including sediment, due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Summary of Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation
Contribution to cumulative Water Resources impacts.	Not Substantial	No additional mitigation required.	Not Substantial
HAZARDS AND PUBLIC SAFETY			
Impact HAZ-1: Improper storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials and waste could result in adverse impacts to the environment.	Significant	Implement mitigation measure MM WR-2.	Less than Significant
Impact HAZ-2: The Project has the potential to impact public health associated with septage waste generation and disposal.	Significant	MM HAZ-2(a): Provide clean and sanitary toilet facilities and ensure septage from portable toilets is disposed of in accordance with California Health and Safety Code sections 117400-117450. MM HAZ-2(b): Prior to installation of security trailer, demonstrate the feasibility for the installation of the proposed onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) and compliance with state and local regulations.	Less than Significant
Impact HAZ-3: The Project could create public health risk associated with potential release of contaminants that could be contained in recycle asphalt and concrete and fill material imported to the site.	Significant	MM HAZ-3: Obtain written approval from the Ventura County Environmental Health Division, Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) to receive imported material.	Less than Significant
Impact HAZ-4: The Project could result in public health impacts related to breeding and/or harborage of vectors of disease, such as mosquitoes, due to standing water onsite.	Significant	MM HAZ-4: Prepare and implement a mosquito control plan throughout the duration of Project mining operations and until site reclamation is deemed complete.	Less than Significant
Impact HAZ-5: The Project could pose a public safety risk associated with unauthorized public access to mine and processing areas.	Significant	MM HAZ-5: Prepare and submit a signage and fencing plan to the County for review and approval. Hazard/Warning signage and fencing shall be installed around the perimeter of previously mined and active mine areas consistent with the County-approved plan.	Less than Significant
Impact HAZ-6: The Project would create the potential for increased risk to public safety associated with the transport, handling, storage, and use of blasting agents.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant

Impact	Significance Before Mitigation	Summary of Mitigation Measures	Significance with Mitigation
Impact HAZ-7: The Project would involve activities that create potential sources of fire ignition and could increase the potential for wildland fires.	Significant	MM HAZ-7: Develop a fire safety plan that describes fire prevention measures including access and defensible space clearing requirements, potential fire scenarios, and action plans for each potential scenario. Install and maintain emergency water distribution systems and provide for emergency fire suppression access to the Project site.	Less than Significant
Impact HAZ-8: The Project could increase the demand for police, fire protection, and other emergency services.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Contribution to cumulative Hazards and Public Safety impacts.	Not Substantial	No additional mitigation required.	Not Substantial
ENERGY			
Impact EN-1: The Project would result in increased use of diesel fuel and electricity.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Contribution to cumulative Energy impacts.	Not Substantial	No additional mitigation required.	Not Substantial
LAND USE AND PLANNING			
Impact LU-1: The Project could conflict with adjacent land uses or adversely affect community character.	Significant	Implement mitigation measures MM VIS-1, MM VIS-2, MM AQ-1, and MM NV-1.	Less than Significant
Impact LU-2: The Project could adversely affect recreational resources.	Less than Significant	No mitigation required.	Less than Significant
Impact LU-3: Project consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies.	Significant	Implement all EIR mitigation measures.	Less than Significant
Contribution to cumulative Land Use and Planning impacts.	Not Substantial	No additional mitigation required.	Not Substantial

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1–INTRODUCTION

1.1 DOCUMENT PURPOSE AND LEGAL AUTHORITY

The Ventura County Resource Management Agency, Planning Division has prepared this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for proposed modifications to the Pacific Rock Quarry Conditional Use Permit (CUP) (CUP 3817-3) and Reclamation Plan, which collectively are described as the proposed "Project" in this EIR. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that state and local agencies, including Ventura County, evaluate the potential environmental effects of discretionary actions and that an EIR be prepared when a project would result in one or more significant environmental impacts.

In accordance with Section 15121 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the purpose of this EIR is to serve as an informational document that, "will inform public agency decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effects of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project."

1.2 LEAD AGENCY

Ventura County Resources Management Agency
Planning Division
800 South Victoria Avenue, L# 1740
Ventura, California 93009
Contact: Justin Bertoline, Senior Planner
Phone: (805) 654-2466
Email: Justin.Bertoline@ventura.org

1.3 PROJECT PROPONENT

Pacific Rock, Inc.
P.O. Box 257
Somis, CA 93066
Contact: Tom Staben (805-445-6433)

Project Proponent's Agent
Sespe Consulting, Inc.
374 Poli Street, Suite 200
Ventura, CA 93001
Contact: John Hecht, P.E. (805-275-1515)

1.4 PROJECT PURPOSE

The Project proponent, Pacific Rock, Inc. (referenced herein as the "Applicant" or "Operator") is requesting the approval of a CUP modification to extend the life of the existing permitted operations for an additional 30 years, expand the mining area, extend the operational days from 6 to 7 days per week (adding Sunday for material load out) with additional material load out hours and limited extended 24 hour operations (60 days maximum per year), allow construction and mobile mining equipment in outdoor storage areas, operate a concrete and asphalt recycling plant, allow for imported material to be used in reclamation fill, and replace an existing mobile home to be used as a 24-hour security trailer.

The Applicant is requesting that the County approve a CUP modification to extend the life of the permit and continue to operate on property zoned Open Space (OS-160) and Agricultural Exclusive (AE-40). The existing facility is an active quarry that supplies large rock for the production of rip-rap, various sizes of crushed rock and aggregate to public works and private projects in Ventura County. The request includes expansion of the mining area to the east to address slope conditions at the northerly and northeasterly side of the quarry and expansion onto recently acquired adjacent land. Under the Project, mining methods would continue as under existing operations, including blasting to loosen the hard rock material and various processing methods.

The Applicant is also requesting approval of an amendment to the existing Reclamation Plan to account for the proposed expanded mine area and to amend specifications for reclaimed conditions at the site. The proposed Reclamation Plan amendment specifies end land uses as "open space" on the benched portions, and "agriculture" on the remaining areas, where grasses would be planted for cattle grazing and would also provide for erosion control. The proposed reclamation would also involve import and placement of fill material at the site.

1.5 EIR CONTENT

As stated in the CEQA Guidelines §15121(a), an EIR is an informational document which will inform public agency decision-makers and the public generally of the significant environmental effect of a project, identify possible ways to minimize the significant effects, and describe reasonable alternatives to the project. An EIR is not intended to recommend either approval or denial of a project. Rather, an EIR is a document which primary purpose is to disclose all potential environmental impacts associated with an action or project. The EIR process and the information it generates is used for purposes that include:

- Informing governmental decision makers and the public about the potential, significant environmental effects of proposed activities;
- Identifying ways that environmental damage can be avoided or significantly reduced; and
- Preventing significant, avoidable damage to the environment by requiring changes to the project through the use of alternatives or mitigation measures when the governmental agency finds the changes to be feasible.

The purpose of a Draft EIR is to provide an opportunity for agency representatives and the public to review and comment on the adequacy of the EIR before it is prepared as a final document and certified by the lead agency decision making body. This Draft EIR has been prepared by the County, acting in its capacity as lead agency, pursuant to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines. The County has independently reviewed and analyzed this Draft EIR in accordance with Public Resources Code (PRC) §21082.1(c)(1). Following circulation of this Draft EIR, the County will prepare a Final EIR. The Final EIR will include responses to comments on the Draft EIR.

The level of detail contained throughout this EIR is consistent with the requirements of CEQA, the CEQA Guidelines, and recent court decisions. The CEQA Guidelines provide the standard by which the adequacy of this EIR is based, stating:

> An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision-makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in the light

> of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15151).

1.5.1 Lead, Responsible, and Trustee Agencies

The obligations of CEQA are carried out by public agencies in three distinct capacities: lead agency, responsible agency, and trustee agency. The lead agency is "the public agency which has the principal responsibility for carrying out or approving a project" (CEQA Guidelines §15367). Ventura County has the principal responsibility for approving the Project. Therefore, Ventura County is the lead agency. The lead agency takes the primary decision-making role in determining the level of environmental review and preparing a comprehensive environmental document for a proposed project.

The County, as the CEQA lead agency, carries primary responsibility for preparing the EIR. Following preparation, public circulation, and certification of the environmental document, the decision makers of the lead agency then approve or deny the project under consideration. In this instance, following certification of the Final EIR, the County will consider approval of the CUP modifications and Reclamation Plan amendment applied for by the Applicant as described and analyzed in this EIR.

Responsible and trustee agencies may also use this document in consideration of various local, state, and federal permits that may be required for activities permitted by the County to proceed. Responsible agencies are those with permitting authority or approval over some aspect of the project under CEQA review (CEQA Guidelines §15381). Responsible agencies rely upon the environmental document prepared by the lead agency in their permitting authority or approval. To ensure the environmental document is adequate for future responsible agency authority or approvals, lead agencies must consult with such agencies throughout the CEQA process. Responsible agencies' comments during the consultation process can only address "those activities involved in a project that are within an area of expertise of the agency or that are required to be carried out or approved by the agency" (PRC §21104(c)). A trustee agency is "a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project which are held in trust for the people of the State of California." (CEQA Guidelines §15386)

1.5.2 Public Participation

As stated in CEQA, "public participation is an essential part of the CEQA process" (CEQA Guidelines §15201). The purpose of requiring public review is to demonstrate that the lead agency has analyzed and considered the environmental implication of a project (CEQA Guidelines §15003). Similar to responsible and trustee agencies, the public is provided opportunities to review and comment during the EIR process. Public comments, like those of agencies, should "focus on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment…" (CEQA Guidelines §15204, emphasis added).

1.6 DRAFT EIR SCOPE AND CONTENTS

1.6.1 Scoping Process and Notice of Preparation

The scope of this EIR encompasses evaluations of the environmental resources that could be affected directly, indirectly, or cumulatively by the proposed Project. Scoping is undertaken to identify the range of actions, alternatives, impacts, and mitigation measures associated with the project to be considered in the EIR. The process undertaken by the lead agency for determining the scope of environmental issues addressed in the EIR includes consultation with responsible agencies and public involvement.

CEQA requires that, once a lead agency determines an EIR is required, the lead agency must distribute a Notice of Preparation (NOP) to each responsible agency with authority over resources that may be impacted by a project (CEQA Guidelines §15082(a)). The NOP should adequately describe the project and potential environmental effects to allow responsible agencies to make a meaningful response (CEQA Guidelines §15082(a)(1)). Responsible agencies must respond within 30 days, providing the lead agency with environmental issues, alternatives, and mitigation measures to explore in the EIR (CEQA Guidelines §15082(b)).

The lead agency may also choose to involve the public or organizations they believe would be concerned with the environmental effects of the project (CEQA Guidelines §15083). Public involvement, to the extent possible, should occur concurrently with release and comment on the NOP.

In accordance with CEQA, the County conducted scoping for the EIR in 2017. The County prepared and circulated an NOP summarizing the Project and advising of the County's intent to prepare an EIR. The NOP was circulated to responsible and trustee agencies and members of the public for review and comment from August 30 through October 2, 2017. Consistent with County policy, circulation of the NOP including mailings to the owners of parcels within 1,000 feet of the project site parcels. The NOP, notice of completion (NOC), and NOP distribution lists and 1,000-foot radius distribution map, are included as Appendix A-1, "Pacific Rock Quarry Mine Expansion Project NOP."

A total of 80 comment letters and emails were received by the County in response to the NOP. The comment letters emails are included in Appendix A-2, "Comments on Pacific Rock Quarry Mine Expansion Project NOP." Commenting agencies included:

- Conejo Open Space Conservation Agency
- City of Thousand Oaks Community Development Department
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- City of Camarillo Department of Community Development
- Native American Heritage Commission, Environmental and Cultural Department
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy
- United States Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service
- Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 7

Agency comment letters identified specific environmental issues for consideration by the County. Other letters and emails received from individuals also identified environmental issues, and several expressed opposition to the proposed expansion. Environmental issues of concern noted in comments included potential effects of the Project on important habitats and special-status plants and wildlife; air quality impacts associated with emissions from expanded operations; visual impacts associated with increased ground disturbance and night operations lighting; increased noise with activities nearer to residences and with expanded operation hours; increased traffic associated with hauling during expanded operational hours; potential for landslides and mudflows; changes in hydrology / stormwater runoff and potential risk of flood; feasibility and desirability of proposed end uses; and conflicts with adjacent land uses including the Conejo Mountain Funeral Home, residential uses in surrounding areas, and open space uses. Some commenters also expressed concern regarding public noticing and solicitation of sufficient community input.

The County Planning Division conducted a scoping meeting for the EIR on September 14, 2017 at the County Government Center. The scoping meeting date, time, and location was advertised in the NOP. The attendance sheet and notes from the September 14, 2017, scoping meeting are included in Appendix A-3, "Scoping Meeting Sign-in and Notes." Two individuals attended the EIR scoping meeting and provided comments – Michelle D'Anne representing the City of Camarillo and a second individual, Mr. Tom Pilcher, resident of Camarillo Springs. Ms. D'Anne did not comment on the scope of the EIR at the scoping meeting. Mr. Pilcher discussed issues associated with geological impacts associated with blasting and landslides and traffic including concerns regarding congestion at Pleasant Valley and Pancho Roads and the addition of 120 trips per day associated with the Project.

Each of the issues raised in comments received during circulation of the NOP was considered by the County in preparation of this EIR. Issues and recommendations contained in comments addressing environmental issues and the scope of the EIR are considered and addressed as deemed appropriate by the County. Comments expressing general opposition or other concerns not related to environmental issues or addressing the scope of the EIR, while not required to be addressed in the EIR, are included in the administrative record and will be considered by County decision makers in deciding whether or not to approve the Project.

1.6.2 Native American Notifications

CEQA Section 21080.3.1 requires that the CEQA lead agency begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of a proposed project, if the tribe requested to the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency of proposed projects in that geographic area and the tribe requests consultation. Lead agencies are required to provide notice and an invitation to consult to tribal representatives having requested to receive such notices for projects within the geography area.

In accordance with PRC 21080.3.1, in 2018 after receiving and deeming complete the application for the Project, the Ventura County Resource Management Agency (RMA) notified the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notification of projects within the Project area. Only one tribe has requested notification: the Barbareño-Ventureño Band of Mission Indians. Accordingly, the RMA sent a letter to Ms. Julie Tumamait-Stenslie, Chair and designated contact for the tribe, on December 15, 2018. The letter included a brief description of the Project, a map illustrating the location of the Project, and an invitation for tribal representatives to consult with the County regarding the Project. No response was received from the Barbareño-Ventureño Band of Mission Indians.

1.6.3 Issues Considered and Eliminated from Further Consideration

Based on an initial review of the Project and on comments received from agencies and the public during scoping, the scope of environmental issues to be evaluated in detail and to be eliminated from further consideration in the EIR was determined.

Although the NOP listed three resource topics that would be addressed in the EIR (i.e., biological resources, noise, and visual resources), in further review of the Project and in consideration of comments on the NOP, the County determined that additional resource subject areas identified in the Environmental Checklist in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines and related topics in the County's Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) warranted evaluation in the EIR. The following environmental resource subject areas are evaluated in Sections 3.2 through 3.13. of this Draft EIR:

- Visual Resources
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources
- Geology and Soils
- Noise and Vibration
- Transportation and Circulation
- Water Resources
- Hazards and Public Safety
- Energy
- Land Use

The subject areas listed below were determined not to require further evaluation, as the Project would not have the potential to result in significant adverse changes to these resources. A more detailed discussion of these issues eliminated from further consideration is provided in Section 3.14, "Issues Eliminated from Further Consideration."

- Mineral Resources
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Utilities
- Coastal Beaches and Sand Dunes
- Sewage Collection/Treatment Facilities

1.6.4 Areas of Controversy

CEQA Guidelines §15123(b)(2) requires discussion of areas of controversy known to the lead agency, including issues raised by agencies and the public. While many of the issues raised during the scoping process may be considered controversial to the public, the issues listed below are those considered by the County to represent the areas of controversy for the Project as related to the environmental review under CEQA. Each of these issues is addressed in this EIR.

- Proposed expansion of the mining area
- Proposed extended hours of operation
- Proposed additional uses, including recycling and soil import/export operations
- Potential land use conflicts associated with aesthetics, air quality, biological resource habitat reductions and reduced movement corridors, noise, and other potential adverse circumstances associated with continued and expanded operation of the quarry and adjacent recreational and residential land uses.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF THE DRAFT EIR

This Draft EIR is organized into the following sections:

Executive Summary
The Executive Summary provides a summary of the Project, environmental impacts and mitigation measures, significant and unavoidable impacts, and alternatives.

Chapter 1: Introduction
This section introduces the Project, describes the intended use of the EIR, identifies the lead agency that has review authority over the Project, lists areas of potential controversy, and describes the public review process.

Chapter 2: Project Description
This section provides a summary of existing conditions and a detailed description of the proposed project including the Applicant's Project objectives, Project location, aspects of the existing operation, aspects of the proposed expansion and extended hours of production, and proposed changes to the reclamation plan. Section 3 also provides a list of potential permits, approvals, and other regulatory requirements.

Section 3.1: Introduction to Impact Analysis
This section provides an overview of the general impact analysis methodology and mitigation measures, discusses impact terminology, and provides an index to the environmental issues addressed in the EIR. Section 3.1 also provides a summary of past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects considered in the cumulative impact analysis.

Sections 3.2 to 3.13: Environmental Impact Analysis Resource Sections
These resource sections describe the environmental setting for a particular resource area (e.g., noise, hydrology, biological resources) and identify the thresholds of significance used to evaluate Project impacts and determine their level of significance. Potential environmental impacts associated with the Project are presented along with mitigation measures that would avoid or reduce the severity of the significant effects of the Project. These sections also provide an evaluation of potential cumulative impacts associated with each research.

Chapter 4: Growth and Irreversible Changes
This section discusses potential growth inducement and irreversible changes that could occur as a result of the Project.

Chapter 5: Alternatives
This section provides a description and an analysis of alternatives to the proposed Project and identifies the environmental superior alternative as required by CEQA.

Chapter 6: List of Preparers
This section identifies lead agency staff, consultants, and other individuals involved in the preparation of the EIR.

Chapter 7: References
This section lists reference documents consulted and cited in the EIR.

Appendices
The appendices include resource studies and other information to support the analysis and other information presented in the EIR.

1.8 DRAFT EIR PUBLIC REVIEW

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15088.5(d), this Draft EIR is distributed for a 45-day (minimum) period of review and comment by the public, responsible agencies, organizations, and other interested parties. Comments or questions about the EIR should be addressed to:

Justin Bertoline, Senior Planner
Ventura County Resource Management Agency, Planning Division
800 South Victoria Avenue, L# 1740
Ventura, California 93009-1740

Phone: (805) 654-2466
Email: Justin.Bertoline@ventura.org

Copies of the Draft EIR can be reviewed at the following locations:

Ventura County Resources Management Agency
Planning Division
800 South Victoria Avenue, L# 1740
Ventura, California 93009
Contact: Justin Bertoline, Senior Planner

On-line at:
https://vcrma.org/divisions/planning (select "CEQA Environmental Review")

Following the public review period, comments and written responses on the Draft EIR will be used to prepare a Final EIR prior to certification and consideration of Project approval by County decision makers. The Final EIR will include individual responses to all comments received on the Draft EIR that address the adequacy of the Draft EIR and environmental issues relevant to the Project.

CHAPTER 2 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

CHAPTER 2–PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION INTRODUCTION

Pacific Rock, Inc. (Applicant or Operator) has requested a modification to the existing conditional use permit (CUP) and an amendment to the reclamation plan for the Pacific Rock Quarry. The proposed CUP modification and reclamation plan amendment are the "Project" subject to evaluation in this Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The Project would extend the life of the existing permitted operations for an additional 30 years, expand the mining area, extend the operational days from 6 to 7 days per week (adding Sunday for material load out) with additional material load out hours and limited extended 24 hour operations (60 days maximum per year), allow construction and mobile mining equipment in outdoor storage areas, operate a concrete and asphalt recycling plant, allow for imported material to be used in reclamation fill, and replace an existing mobile home to be used as a 24-hour security trailer. This chapter of the EIR describes the proposed Project and discusses the existing operations and site conditions to define the baseline against which impacts of the Project will be compared. The Project described as proposed in the April 1, 2019, "*Project Description Pacific Rock Quarry Conditional Use Permit Modification Application LU10-0003"* (Sespe, 2019a) and clarifications provided by the Applicant in response to County data requests subsequent to the April 1, 2019 submittal.

2.2 PROJECT LOCATION

The Pacific Rock Quarry is located approximately 1.5 miles east of Lewis Road and approximately two miles south of State Highway 101 off a private road (Howard Road) in unincorporated Ventura County. (See Figure 2-1, "Regional Location" and Figure 2-2, "Site Location."). The physical address for the site is 1000 South Howard Road, Camarillo, California 93012. The existing quarry is located within Assessor's Parcel Number ("APN") 234-0-060-220. Proposed expansion areas are within additional portions of APN 234-0-060-220 and a portion of APN 234-0-060-190. Both parcels are located in Section 8, Township 1 North, Range 20 West, San Bernardino Baseline and Meridian. The term "Project site" is used herein to reference the proposed 204.4-acre CUP area, which includes the existing mining operation and areas proposed for mine expansion and reclamation under the Project, as shown on Figure 2-3, "Existing and Proposed CUP and Mine Area Boundaries."

Table 2-1, "Project Site Parcels and Designations," summarizes the areas and Ventura County General Plan Land Use Map (December 23, 2016) land use designations and zoning designations of parcels within with the Project site is located.

Table 2-1. Project Site Parcels and Designations

Assessor's Parcel Number *(APN)*	Area *(acres)*	General Plan Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation
234-0-060-220	241.34	Agricultural (40 Ac. Min.) Open Space (10 Ac. Min.)	Agricultural Exclusive (AE)-40 ac/HCWC
234-0-060-190	476.56	Agricultural (40 Ac. Min.) Open Space (10 Ac. Min.)	Open Space (OS)-160 ac/HCWC

Notes:

1. HCWC component of zoning designation reflects Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridor overlay zoning pursuant to County amendments to zoning ordinance in March 2019.

2.3 HISTORY OF MINING OPERATION AND PERMITS

Quarrying at the site began in the late 1800's when Southern Pacific Railroad constructed a spur line to a hillside at the northwest corner of the existing quarry for aggregate production for railroad bed material. The existing quarry has been in operation since 1902.

A CUP was originally granted in 1980 to the L.S. Hawley Corporation. On March 25, 1999, the Ventura County Planning Commission approved a 10-year permit extension (CUP 3817-2) and adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the mining operation. In December 2000, Pacific Rock, Inc., acquired the mining facility and took over its operation. On March 23, 2000, the Planning Commission granted a modified permit (CUP 3817-3) to authorize a maximum production rate of 86,000 tons per year (a continuation of the historic level of production) and hours of operation from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Saturday. The Commission concurrently approved a Reclamation Plan to reclaim the mined areas to open space upon completion of mining. On June 9, 2010, Ventura County Resource Management Agency (RMA) approved a permit adjustment to CUP 3817-3, Condition 1b, which abates a Zoning Violation at the Pacific Rock Mine (Case No. ZV03-077) related to the storage, use, and maintenance of equipment at the Pacific Rock Mine, in excess of what was permitted by CUP 3817-3. On April 19, 2011, the County approved a Reclamation Plan Compliance Amendment (RPCA-CUP3817-3) intended to abate Zoning Violation Case No. ZV07-0213, which the County issued for mining activities that occurred outside the approved CUP and Reclamation Plan boundaries near the north east slope and southeast corner of the approved mining boundaries. RPCA-CUP3817-3 added a total of 1.12 acres to the reclamation boundary addressing areas where mining operations had taken place outside of the approved mine boundary.

2.4 EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

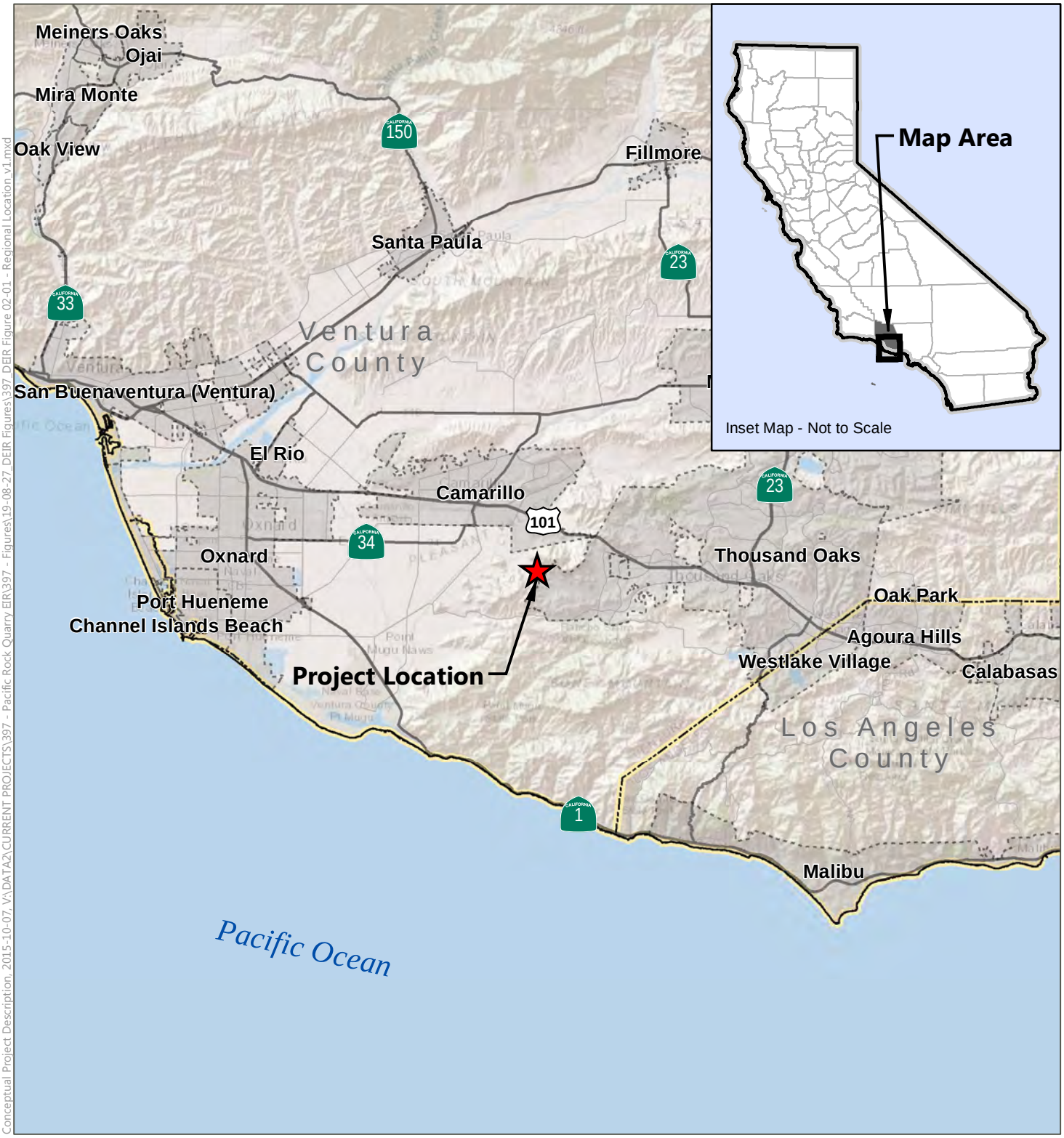
A detailed discussion of existing site conditions is provided in an "Existing Setting" section of each resource section in Chapter 3 of this EIR. The following sections provide a summary discussion of the existing site conditions to provide the general context for the site setting and aid readers in understanding the existing operation and proposed Project.

2.4.1 Disturbed Areas

Surface mining activities, processing facilities, loading and weighing areas, and equipment storage areas have resulted in the disturbance of approximately 69 acres. Reclamation has not been completed on any of the disturbed areas. Mining excavation has resulted in the creation of near-vertical slopes up to approximately 100 feet in height near the northern and eastern edges of the quarry. Aggregate processing equipment is operated at various locations within the central area of the site and other facilities and equipment storage areas are present.

2.4.2 Geology and Soils

The Project site is located at the southwest base of Conejo Mountain, as shown on Figure 2-2. The geologic unit that underlies and is exposed over much of the mining site is designated the Conejo Volcanics. Sparse rocky loam soils weathered from the Conejo igneous rocks are present in some areas of the mining site. The Conejo Volcanic bedrock is the aggregate material excavated and hauled from the site.



Conceptual Project Description, 2015-10-07, V:\DATA2\CURRENT PROJECTS\397 - Pacific Rock Quarry EIR\397 - Figures\19-08-27_DEIR Figure 02-01 - Regional Location_v1.mxd

SOURCES: ESRI World Shaded Relief accessed June 2019, ESRI World Topographic Map accessed June 2019; ESRI World Streetmap, 2009; Adapted by Benchmark Resources in 2019

NOTES: This figure was prepared for land use planning and informational purposes only. The information shown and its accuracy are reflective of the date the data was accessed or produced.

Project Location
City Boundary
County Boundary
Highway
Major Road

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 2.5 5 10 Miles

Regional Location
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 2-1

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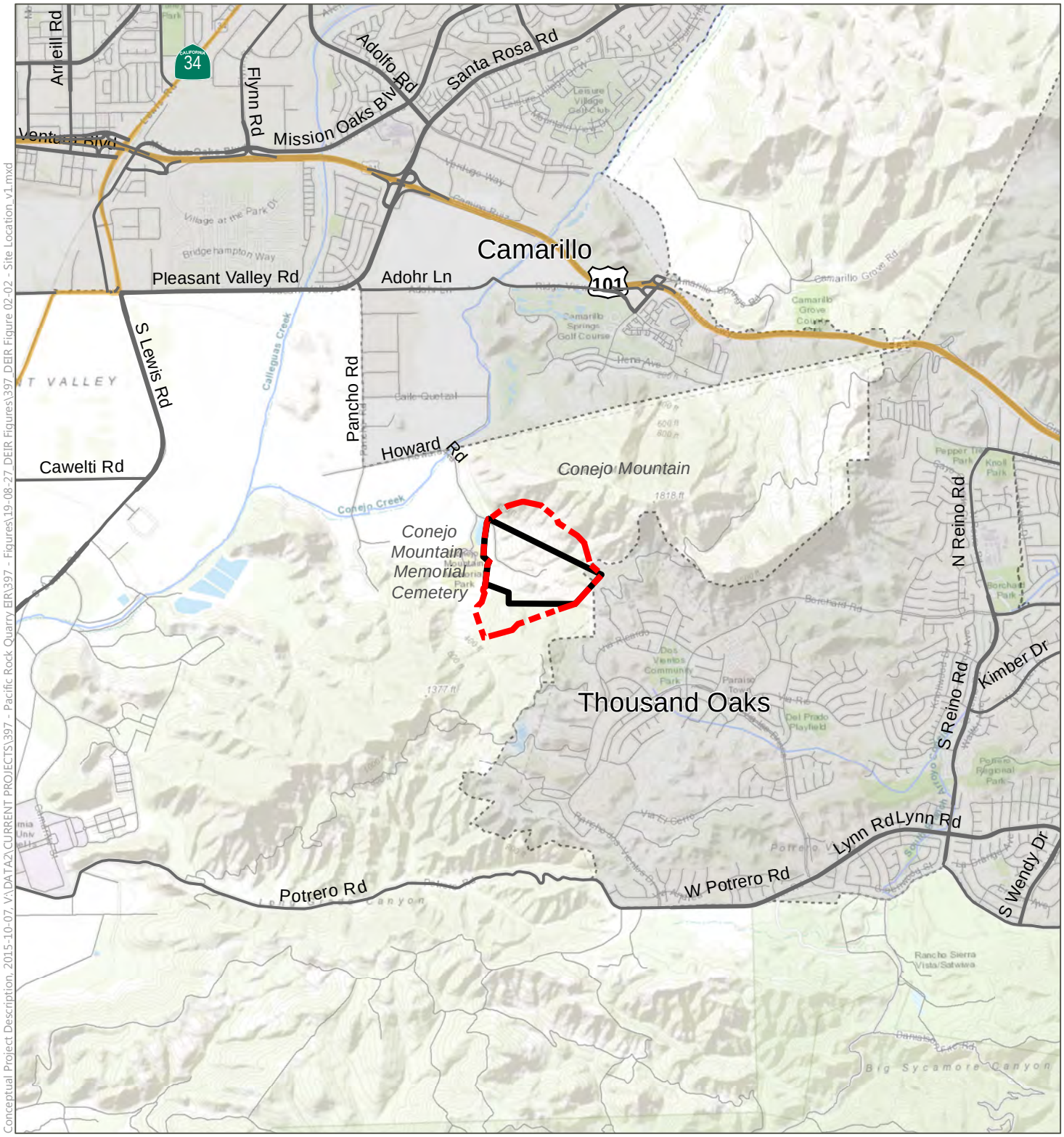

Conceptual Project Description, 2015-10-07, V:\DATA2\CURRENT PROJECTS\397 - Pacific Rock Quarry EIR\397 - Figures\19-08-27_DEIR Figures\397_DEIR Figure 02-02 - Site Location_v1.mxd

SOURCES: ESRI World Shaded Relief accessed June 2019, ESRI World Topographic Map accessed June 2019; ESRI World Streetmap, 2009; Adapted by Benchmark Resources in 2019

NOTES: This figure was prepared for land use planning and informational purposes only. The info shown and its accuracy are refelctive of the date the data was accessed or produced.

- Proposed CUP Boundary
- Existing CUP Boundary
- City Boundary
- Water Body
- Highway
- Major Road
- Street

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 2,000 4,000 8,000 Feet

Site Location

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

Figure 2-2

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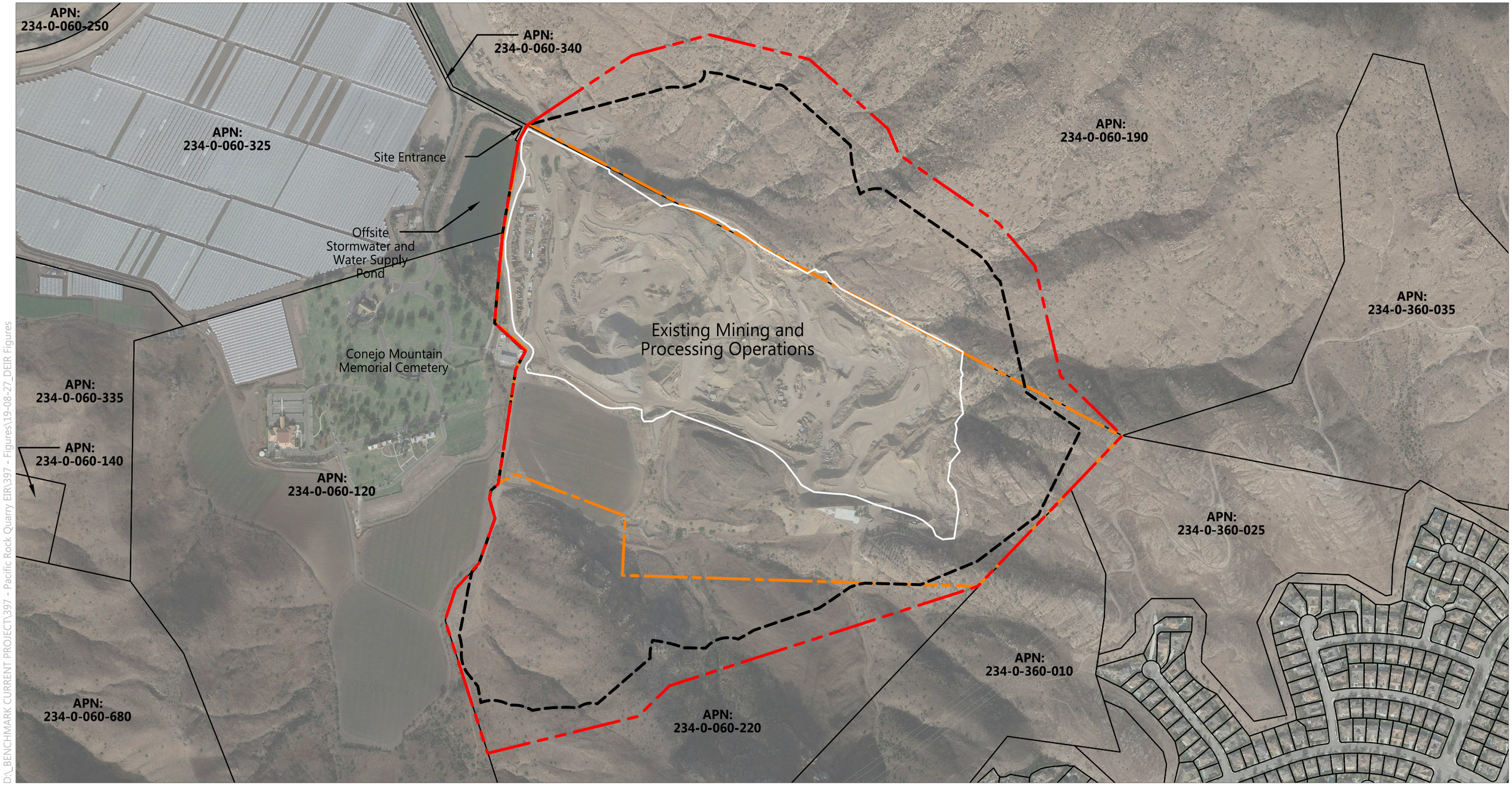

D:_BENCHMARK CURRENT PROJECT\397 - Pacific Rock Quarry EIR\397 - Figures\19-08-27_DEIR Figures

SOURCES: Aerial: Google Earth (12-31-2017); Permit & Mine Area Boundaries: Sespe AutoCAD dated 2-15-2017; Parcels: County of Ventura GIS Data Donwloads, accessed June of 2019; compiled by Benchmark Resources in 2020

NOTES:
1. "APN" = Assessor's Parcel Number.
2. "CUP" = Conditional Use Permit
3. APN shown based on each parcel's individual 10-digit APN.

- Existing Mine/Facilities Boundary (62.5 acres)
- Proposed Mine Area Boundary (172.8 acres)
- Existing CUP Boundary (111.5 acres)
- Proposed CUP Boundary (204.4 acres)
- Parcel Boundary

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Existing and Proposed CUP and Mine Area Boundaries

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

Figure 2-3

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2.4.3 Hydrology

The Project site is within the Calleguas Creek Watershed. Stormwater within the Project site generally sheet flows to the west and southwest. There are unnamed ephemeral drainages within the proposed expansion areas to the north, east, and south of the existing mined area. The surface flows and drainage features within the Project site convey surface water runoff to a water storage pond located immediately offsite to the west of the site. When water levels reach capacity of the pond, the water ultimately flows into Calleguas Creek. Catchment basins and culverts have been installed in some areas of the Project site to direct runoff away from the active mining area and to the offsite pond.

2.4.4 Biological Resources

Native and non-native vegetation is present in the undisturbed areas of the Project site. Special-status plants and occupied habitat of special-status animal species are present on the Project site. (*Special-status species* are those listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Rare under the federal or state Endangered Species Acts, Candidate Species, California Fully Protected Species, and, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15380[d], all other species tracked by the California Natural Diversity Database [CNDDB], which are considered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife [CDFW] to be those species of greatest conservation concern, and locally important species as defined by the Ventura County General Plan.) The site contains suitable habitat for nesting birds protected by the California Fish and Game Code and the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Fifteen southern California black walnut trees and thirteen coast live oak trees exist on the Project site, including three "heritage" oak trees in the proposed excavation area.

2.4.5 Agriculture

The Project site includes 4.1-acres of Prime Farmland and 6.7-acres of Unique Farmland, as designated by the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program. These portions of the site are contiguous in an approximately 11-acre area located within the existing CUP area but outside of the existing mine area boundary. Presently, this area is used for strawberry production. The area is within the proposed mine area boundary; however, no surface mining activities are proposed in this area.

2.5 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Section 15124(b) of the State CEQA Guidelines states that the project description shall contain "a statement of the objectives sought by the proposed project" and that "the statement of objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project." The objectives of the project proponent facilitate development and evaluation of alternatives, and preparation of findings.

As stated in the Applicant's Project Description (Sespe, 2019a), the Applicant's primary objectives for the Project are to:

- meet the market demand for rip rap, stone, and aggregate products;
- continue to recover rock and rip rap in a manner that is environmentally responsible and to comply with applicable laws and regulations during material production, while maximizing the utilization of the resource and meeting the financial expectations of the owners;
- mine and process quality rock as aggregate for sale. Provide a reliable and sustainable, local source of high-quality aggregate to help meet the current and long-term demand for construction materials in Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles counties;

- create additional, long-term supply of local aggregate reserves resulting in significantly shorter truck trip distances by reducing the need to haul aggregate from greater distances to meet demand and thereby reducing fuel consumption, air pollution, traffic congestion, road maintenance and the cost of delivery;
- provide an additional local source of construction aggregate with enough annual sales capacity (0.47 million tons) to encourage a healthy competitive market;
- create an environmentally sound project that would balance the recovery of the aggregate resource with the protection of other resources including wildlife habitat, groundwater, surface water, and air quality through environmentally sound and economically viable reclamation of the site in accordance with the approved reclamation plan;
- create a project that will return a significant amount of mined land back to agriculture and open space; and
- create local quality jobs, while also benefiting local downstream businesses and creating an enhanced tax revenue to the county.

2.6 EXISTING OPERATIONS AND PROPOSED PROJECT

This section discusses existing operations and site conditions and describes differences between the Project and existing operations and planned reclamation.

2.6.1 CUP Area and Surface Mining Activity Area

The area subject to CUP 3817-3 encompasses 111.5 acres. Within this area, mining and facilities are authorized on area of approximately 62.5 acres pursuant to a Reclamation Plan Compliance Amendment (RPCA-CUP3817-3) approved on April 19, 2011. The Project would expand the CUP area by 93 acres resulting in a total CUP area of 204.4 acres. The mining and mine-related facilities area is proposed to increase from the currently authorized 62.5 acres to a total of 172.8 acres. Figure 2-3 depicts the approved mining and mine-related facilities area and CUP boundaries and the proposed Project mining area and CUP boundaries.

2.6.2 Production and Shipment Rates

CUP 3817-3 authorizes the production and export of a maximum of 86,000 tons per year of mineral materials (e.g., rip-rap and aggregate materials). The baseline for annual production is the 10-year average annual production as reported by the Operator during the period 2008-2017. This baseline annual production is 20,900 tons.

The existing operation generates up to 30 truckloads of aggregate deliveries per normal (i.e., non-emergency) operating day, which is 60 one-way truck trips. With a haul truck capacity of 25 tons, the existing operation generates a maximum shipment of 750 tons of aggregate material per operating day (30 loads x 25 tons per load = 750 tons per day).

The Applicant requests an increase in permitted annual production and sales from the existing 86,000 tons per year to 468,000 tons per year (the amount of excavated material would be greater than the amount of material produced and sold due to the removal of topsoil and overburden during mining, and the removal of "fines" during processing). The requested increase in maximum annual production and sales represents an increase of 382,000 tons per year above the current permitted maximum and an increase of 447,100 tons per year above the 10-year annual average baseline production and sales. No change in the maximum

number of daily truckloads is proposes, and the operation would continue to be limited to a maximum of 120 one-way truck trips (60 truckloads) during any one day.

2.6.3 Mining and Processing Methods

Existing mining operations at the site involve controlled blasting to lift and loosen exposed bedrock and the use of diesel-powered equipment to move these materials to sorting, processing, and stockpile areas.

Blasting is occasional and the actual detonation duration is about 1 second. Primary blasting at the site involves drilling approximately 40, 3-inch diameter holes to a depth of approximately 40 feet. Each hole is filled with blasting agent (ammonium-nitrate fuel oil) and detonation of each hole is separate by about 5 milliseconds for a total duration of about 1 second. Primary blasts are conducted approximately twice a year. Smaller blasts are performed up to twice per week and include up to about 10 holes per blast. The transportation, storage, and handling of explosives and the associated hazardous substances is performed or supervised by a licensed explosives expert contracted by the Operator.

Once loosened by blasting, the material either falls to the toe of the quarry face or is further loosened from the mining face with a front-end loader or bulldozer until the materials falls to the toe of the quarry face. The material is then sorted into size classes. Depending on size and product demand, the material may require no further processing for sale as rip-rap. Material requiring processing for sale as base rock is crushed onsite by a portable crusher and sorted by size using vibrating scalp screens. Once sorted by size, materials are conveyed to onsite product stockpiles.

Under the Project, no changes to the mining and blasting methods, processing methods, or mining and processing equipment are proposed.

2.6.4 Mine Configuration

Figure 2-3 depicts the existing and proposed CUP area and the existing and proposed surface mining activity areas. The Project includes a 93-acre expansion of the area subject to the CUP to a total of 204.4 acres. The area authorized to be disturbed by mining excavation and other surface mining activities is proposed to increase to 172.8 acres. The proposed mining excavation would create final slopes with an overall slope gradient of 1 horizontal to 1 vertical (1h:1v). These slopes would be comprised of a series of 50-foot wide horizontal benches separated by 50-foot high vertical cut walls. Figure 2-4, "Proposed Reclaimed Site Configuration," illustrates the configuration of the final reclaimed surface that would remain at the completion of mining excavation. The maximum overall height of the remnant highwall would be approximately 600 feet and would be located along the northern edge of the quarry. The ultimate configuration of the quarry would include three large near-level pad areas at elevations above mean sea level of approximately 190 feet, 250 feet, and 300 feet. The proposed Reclamation Plan specifies that the mining excavation areas be set back from the property boundaries by a minimum of 50 feet.

2.6.5 Offsite Materials Transport

For outgoing deliveries, material is loaded by a front-end loader onto haul trucks for delivery from the product stockpile areas. Rip-rap is loaded onto haul trucks using an excavator. Haul trucks transport aggregates produced at the site. Haul trucks receiving material at the site are typically have a load capacity of 25 tons. Trucks are weighed at an onsite truck scale prior to departing the site bound for destinations where aggregate materials are delivered. The aggregate is typically used for construction and landscaping.

Trucks depart the site to the north then west along Howard Road, then turn right (north) on Pancho Road to Pleasant Valley Road. From there, haul trucks either turn right (northbound) on Pleasant Valley Road for access to U.S. Highway 101 southbound or northbound or turn left (westbound) on Pleasant Valley Road. Inbound trucks use this same road network. Deliveries from the site are made to areas within Ventura, Los Angeles and Santa Barbara counties, and continuously vary depending on the specific locations of deliveries.

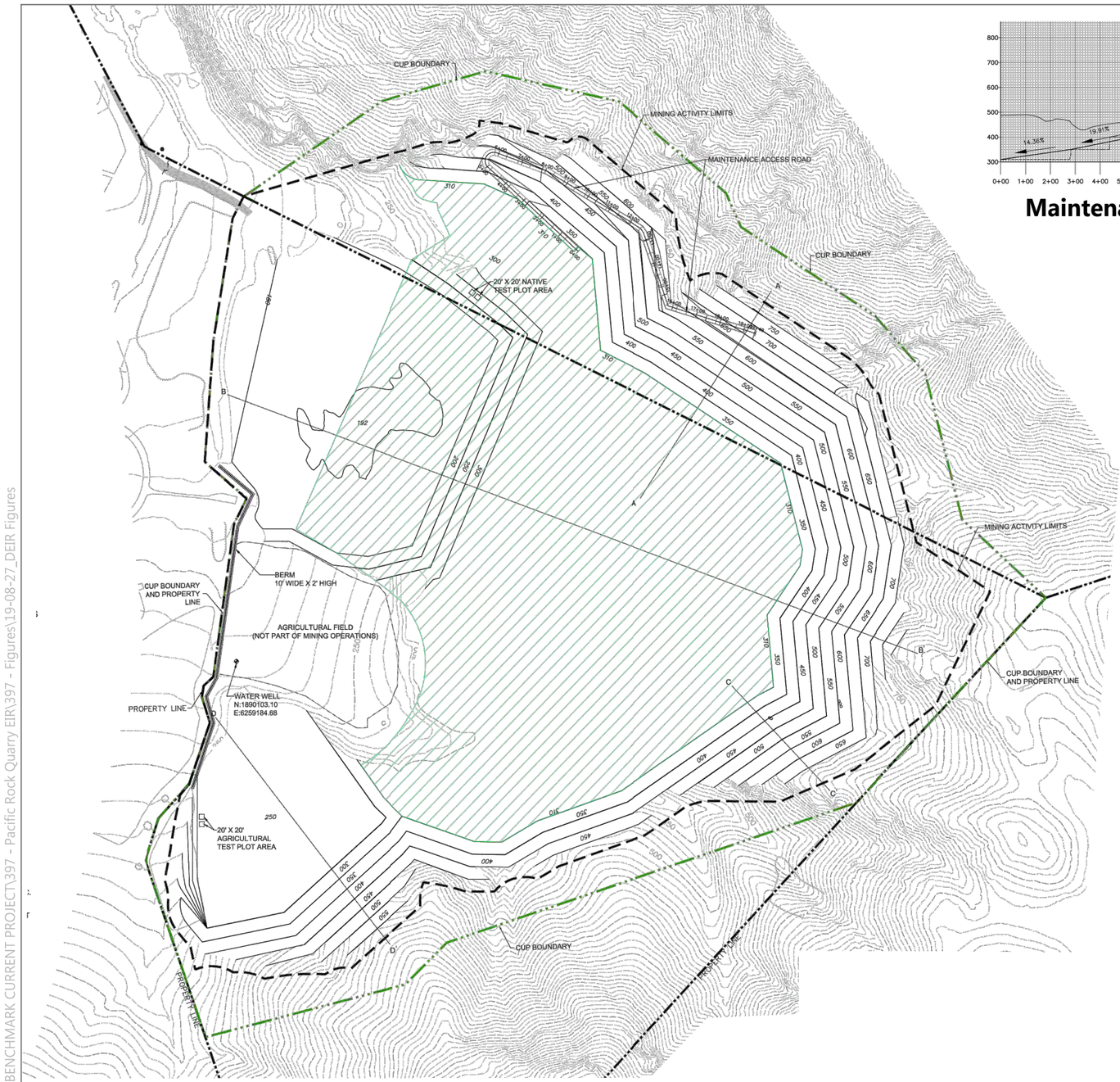
Under the Project, no changes to truck loading or hauling practices, routing, or the number of annual, daily, or peak-hour maximum haul truck trips are proposed. As discussed below, the Project would modify (extend) the hours of operation, which would allow for truck loading and hauling during additional hours of the day and days of the week, but loading and hauling practices would remain unchanged.

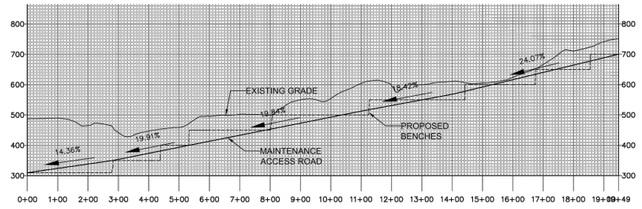
2.6.6 Proposed Recycle Operations

The Applicant proposes the use of a portable recycling plant to crush and process recycled concrete and asphalt at the site, to be located as shown on Figure 2-5, "Existing and Proposed Structures and Equipment." The recycle plant would utilize conveyors, a crusher, and screen to recycle materials. The plant would be approximately 133 feet in length, 115 feet wide, and 30 feet high. Up to 30,000 cubic yards per year of concrete and asphalt debris would be received, crushed, and sold as base material. Material received and shipped would be considered in the operation's 60 loads per day truck trip limit. See site plan and attachments for details on the plant and location on the site.

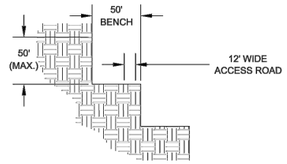
2.6.7 Proposed Fill Import and Export

Clean fill material would be imported to the site and processed for sale as an aggregate material or used in preparing pad areas of the site for the end use of agriculture. Fill material would consist of soil, mud, rocks, and minor amounts organic material, but would not contain construction debris. Up to 100,000 cubic yards of imported fill could be received at the site annually. Imported fill received at and shipped from the site would be considered in the operation's 60 loads per day truck trip limit.



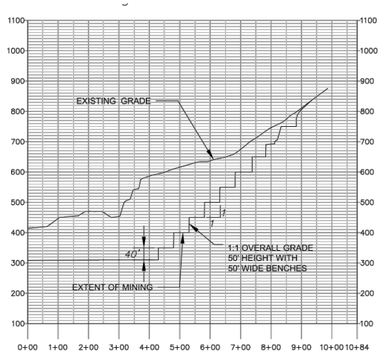


Maintenance Access Road Profile

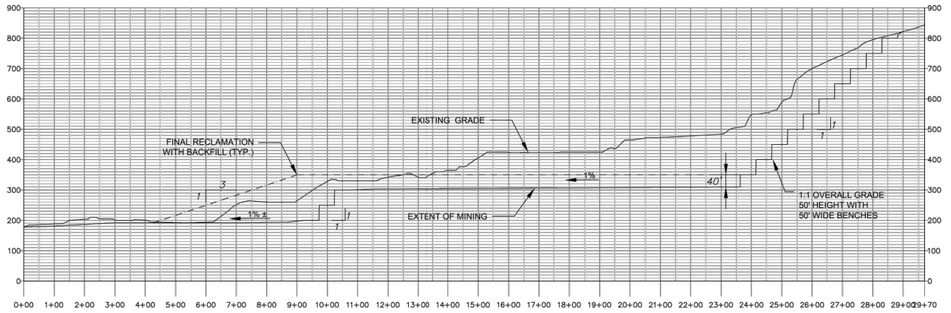


Maintenance Access Road Section (TYP.)

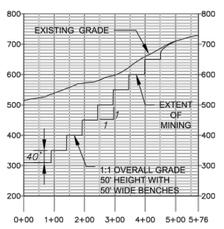
(Not to Scale)



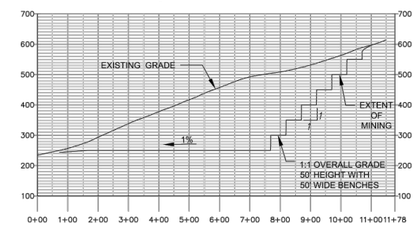
Cross Section: A-A'



Cross Section: B-B'



Cross Section: C-C'



Cross Section: D-D'

SOURCES: Permit and Mine Area Boundaries: Sespe Consulting, 4-1-2019; Parcels: County of Ventura GIS Data Donwloads accessed June of 2019; adapted by Benchmark Resources in 2019

- Property Boundary
- Proposed CUP Boundary
- Proposed Mine Area Boundary
- Existing Topography
- 250 — Reclamation Contours (50 feet, vertical 0)
- Berm (10' Wide X 2' High)
- Backfill Areas

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N 0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Proposed Reclaimed Site Configuration

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

Figure 2-4

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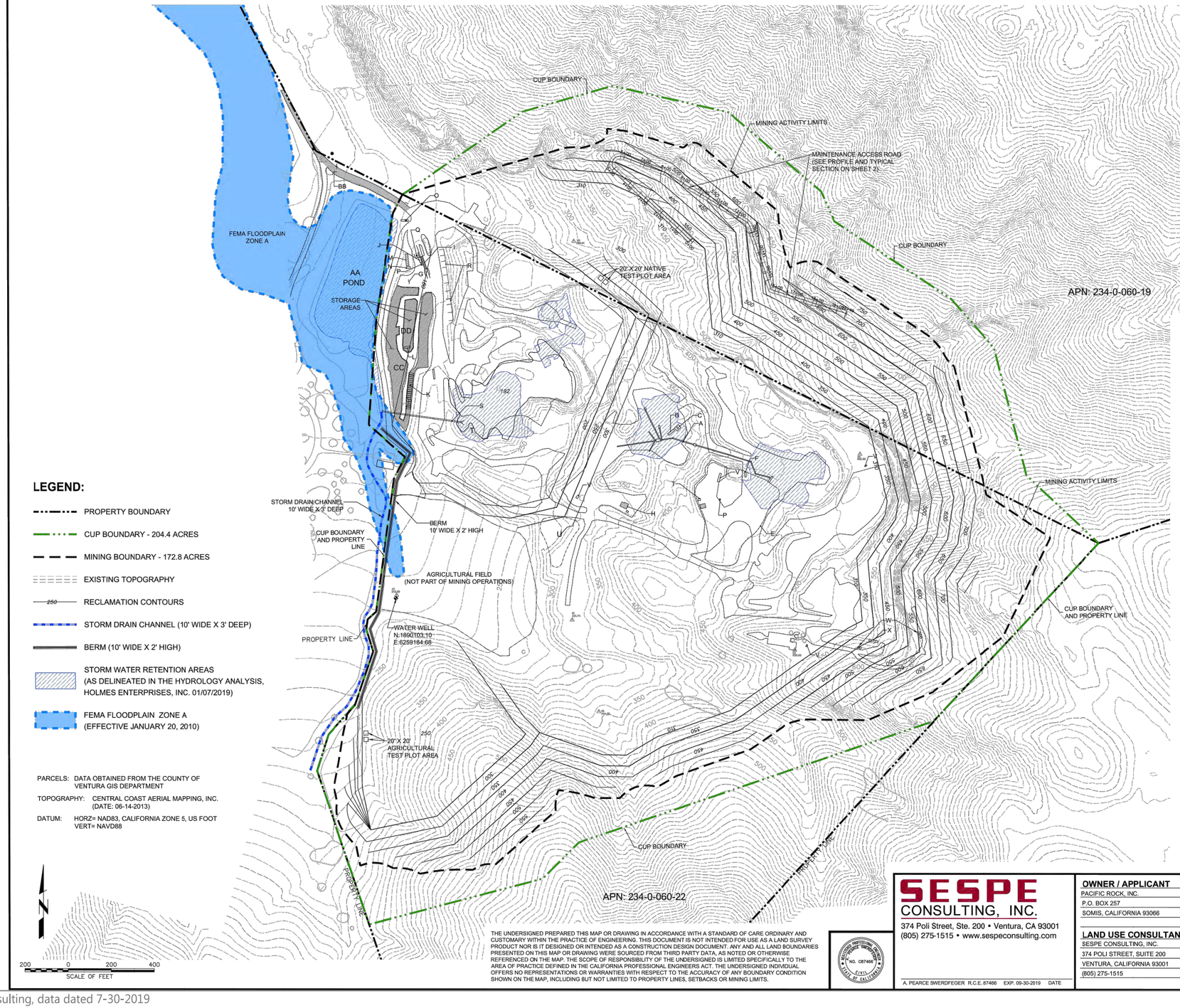


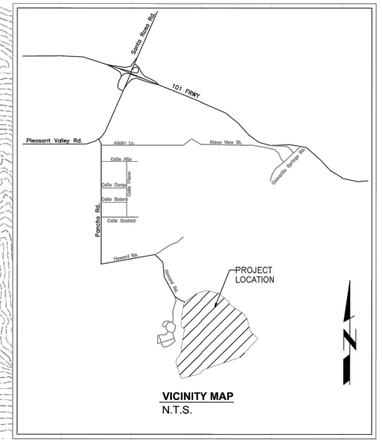
LEGEND:

- PROPERTY BOUNDARY
- CUP BOUNDARY - 204.4 ACRES
- MINING BOUNDARY - 172.8 ACRES
- EXISTING TOPOGRAPHY
- 250 RECLAMATION CONTOURS
- STORM DRAIN CHANNEL (10' WIDE X 3' DEEP)
- BERM (10' WIDE X 2' HIGH)
- STORM WATER RETENTION AREAS (AS DELINEATED IN THE HYDROLOGY ANALYSIS, HOLMES ENTERPRISES, INC. 01/07/2019)
- FEMA FLOODPLAIN ZONE A (EFFECTIVE JANUARY 20, 2010)

PARCELS: DATA OBTAINED FROM THE COUNTY OF VENTURA GIS DEPARTMENT

TOPOGRAPHY: CENTRAL COAST AERIAL MAPPING, INC. (DATE: 06-14-2013)

DATUM: HORZ= NAD83, CALIFORNIA ZONE 5, US FOOT VERT= NAVD88



VICINITY MAP
N.T.S.

PROJECT NOTES:

PROJECT INFORMATION			
APN	ZONING	GENERAL PLAN	ACRES
234-0-060-220	AE-40	OPEN SPACE	476.56
234-0-060-190	OS-160	OPEN SPACE	241.34

PROJECT AREA	
CUP AREA	204.4
RECLAMATION AREA	127.8

ADJACENT PROPERTIES		
APN	ZONING	GENERAL PLAN
234-0-060-12	AE-40	AGRICULTURE (40 AC. MIN.)
234-0-060-32	AE-40	AGRICULTURE (40 AC. MIN.)
234-0-060-19	OS-160	OPEN SPACE (10 AC. MIN.)
234-0-080-38	OS-160	OPEN SPACE (10 AC. MIN.)
234-0-070-14	OS-160	OPEN SPACE (10 AC. MIN.)
234-0-070-14	OS-160	OPEN SPACE (10 AC. MIN.)

PROJECT COMPONENT LIST			
MAP ID	PROJECT COMPONENT	EXISTING / PROPOSED	NOTES
A	PROCESSING PLANT	EXISTING	
B	ELECTRICAL CONTROL ROOM	EXISTING	FOR PROCESSING PLANT/CONVEYORS
C	SEA TRAIN CARGO CONTAINERS FOR PROCESSING PLANT STORAGE (2)	EXISTING	
	STOCKPILES	EXISTING	STOCKPILE LOCATIONS/HEIGHTS WILL VARY AND WILL RELOCATE TO VARIOUS LOCATIONS
E	MOBILE EQUIPMENT STORAGE AREA (MINING)	EXISTING	
F	5,000 GALLON WATER TANK	EXISTING	
G	EMPLOYEE PARKING (QUARRY OPERATORS)	EXISTING	
H	FABRICATION AREA (WELDING EQUIPMENT)	EXISTING	
I	SCALE	EXISTING	
J	SCALE HOUSE	EXISTING	
K	SEA CARGO CONTAINERS FOR STORAGE (19)	EXISTING	
L	HAZARDOUS MATERIALS STORAGE AREA	EXISTING	
M	SECURITY TRAILER	EXISTING	TO BE REPLACED
N	ON SITE WASTE HOLDING TANK	EXISTING	TO BE REPLACED WITH SEPTIC SYSTEM OR PERMITTED
O	12,000 GALLON WATER STORAGE TANK (1)	EXISTING	
P	PORTABLE RESTROOMS (3)	EXISTING	
Q	EMPLOYEE PARKING (2 SPACES AT SCALE HOUSE)	EXISTING	
R	PRODUCT BINS	EXISTING	
S	DRAINAGE PIPE	EXISTING	
T	DESILTING BASIN	EXISTING	125' x 75' TYPICAL - WILL RELOCATE ON-SITE PER PROJECT PHASING
U	TOPSOIL STORAGE AREA	PROPOSED	
V	BLASTING SUPPLY BUNKERS (3)	EXISTING	
W	WATER TANKS (5) 3,000 GAL. EACH	EXISTING	
X	GENERATOR	EXISTING	
AA	POND	EXISTING	
BB	GATE	EXISTING	
CC	CONSTRUCTION EQUIPMENT STORAGE YARD AND BONEYARD	EXISTING	
DD	VEHICLE MAINTENANCE AREA	EXISTING	

SESPE CONSULTING, INC.
374 Poli Street, Ste. 200 • Ventura, CA 93001
(805) 275-1515 • www.sespeconsulting.com

A. PEARCE SWERDFEGER R.C.E. 87466 EXP. 09-30-2019 DATE

OWNER / APPLICANT
PACIFIC ROCK, INC.
P.O. BOX 257
SOMIS, CALIFORNIA 93066

LAND USE CONSULTANT
SESPE CONSULTING, INC.
374 POLI STREET, SUITE 200
VENTURA, CALIFORNIA 93001
(805) 275-1515

REVISIONS

MARK	DATE	DESCRIPTION	BY
	07/30/19	ORIGINAL PLAN	GC

REVIEWED BY: DATE

DATE

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY
1000 SOUTH HOWARD ROAD
CAMARILLO, CALIFORNIA 93012

FACILITIES & MINING PLAN

SCALE: HORIZ. AS SHOWN VERT. AS SHOWN
DRAWN BY: G.CAMUS
CHECKED BY: P. SWERDFEGER, P.E.

FIGURE NUMBER
1 OF 3

V:\DATA2\CURRENT PROJECTS\397 - Pacific Rock Quarry EIR\397 - Figures\19-08-27_DEIR Figures

SOURCES: Sespe Consulting, data dated 7-30-2019

NOTES:
1. Figure not to scale.

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

Existing and Proposed Structures and Equipment
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 2-5

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2.6.8 Facilities, Structures and Equipment

Existing facilities, structures and equipment associated with the operation are located as shown on Figure 2-5, and include the following:

- Mobile home (to be replaced by 24-hour security trailer)
- Scale house and scale
- Aggregate processing plant and control room
- Sea-cargo containers
- Blasting supply bunkers
- Water storage tanks
- One (1) 14′ x 12′ Surge Bin with a 30′ x 3′ conveyor
- Nineteen (19) 60′ x 3′ Conveyors
- One (1) 80′ x 3′ Conveyor
- One (1) 90′ x 3′ Conveyor
- One (1) Belt Scale
- One (1) 5′ x 18′ 3 Deck Linkbelt Screen, Model JZ6964A, Serial No. RV68157-3, with underbelt conveyor, equipped with water spray bars
- One (1) Jaw Crusher, ID No. BB, used with two (2) additional 30″ x 60′ conveyors
- Simplicity Rip Rap Sorter, Model 4524, Serial No. 1078-5678, includes associated Primary Grizzly
- Conveyor and Primary and Secondary Grizzly Chutes
- Extec Portable Mobile Screening Plant, Model S-5, Serial No. 9542, 500 tons/hr., consisting of (1)
- vibrating grizzly, (1) screen, and (5) conveyors; equipped with water sprays; powered by a Deutz diesel engine
- Powerscreen Portable Mobile Screening Plant, Model 800-PS (Powertrack), Serial No. 7221042, 250 tons/hr., consisting of (1) receiving hopper, (1) vibrating grizzly, (1) screen, and (1) conveyor; powered by a Deutz diesel engine

Under the Project, the existing equipment (or its equivalent replacement) would continue to be used. The recycle plant discussed above would be added and the existing mobile home would be replaced with a 24-hour security trailer. The proposed trailer would occupy approximately 880 square feet. and have a length of approximately 66 feet and width of approximately 14 feet. The trailer would have a kitchen and restroom facilities.

2.6.9 Hours of Operation

Existing hours of operations are between 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Saturday. This includes mining excavation and processing, equipment fueling and maintenance, and aggregate truck hauling. Under the existing CUP, operations outside of these times may be authorized by the Ventura County Planning Director under special circumstances, such as during emergencies.

The Project would expand the hours of operations and operating days per week. Operational hours for equipment maintenance and aggregate hauling would be expanded to 5:30 AM to 10:00 PM. The project would also allow for 24-hour operations to accommodate special circumstances up to 60 days per year to accommodate County Public Works Agency projects, California Department of Transportation projects,

and other special projects that require nighttime deliveries. Weekly operations would be expanded to include Sundays for equipment maintenance and aggregate hauling. The operating schedule for mining excavation and processing will not change. The existing and proposed operational schedule is presented in Table 2-2, "Existing and Proposed Days and Hours of Operation."

Table 2-2. Existing and Proposed Days and Hours of Operations

Activity	Existing Operation	Project
Mining excavation and Material Processing (e.g., blasting, excavation, and aggregate processing)	Monday – Saturday (6 days per week) 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Monday – Saturday (6 days per week) 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Recycle Plant	None.	Monday – Saturday (6 days per week) 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Equipment Fueling and Maintenance	Monday – Saturday (6 days per week) 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Monday – Sunday (7 days per week) 5:30 AM – 10:00 PM
Truck Activity (water truck usage, haul truck loading, arrival and departures)	Monday – Saturday (6 days per week) 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Monday – Sunday (7 days per week) 5:30 AM – 10:00 PM
Special Circumstances	Increased haul truck trips and hours/days of operation with authorization of Ventura County Planning Director during storm-related emergencies.	Up to 60 days per year of 24-hour operations for public works, Caltrans, and special public projects that require nighttime deliveries.

2.6.10 Number of Workers

The existing operation employs up to 12 people as equipment and scalehouse operators and maintenance workers. Up to 12 workers are onsite during normal operations. The Project would not increase the number of workers on site during a typical operational shift, although additional shifts could be added on days during which operations are conducted from 5:30 AM to 10:00 PM.

2.6.11 Haul Truck and Other Vehicle Trips

CUP 3817-3 authorizes a maximum of 60 haul truck arrivals (60 truckloads or 120 one-way truck trips) in any one day. This limit is not proposed to change under the Project. CUP 3817-3 authorizes that during "storm emergencies" this limit may be exceeded if authorized by the Planning Director. As discussed above, operations under the Project, including haul of fill import and export and recycle materials, would be limited to a total of 120 truck trips per day.

2.6.12 Utilities

Electrical service is provided to the site by the Southern California Edison Company. No additional increase to existing lines would be necessary nor would any overhead facilities need to be relocated for proposed operations. Existing and proposed operations do not use natural gas and no natural gas facilities would be modified or installed associated with the Project. Phone/internet service is provided by locally available wireless service providers at the scale house, and would continue to be used under the Project.

2.6.13 Stormwater Management

Several existing stormwater retention areas are located the existing quarry area which are intended to control stormwater runoff and reduce/eliminate sediment movement from the site. Retention of stormwater is the primary control mechanism to reduce sediment in storm water discharges from the mining area to the agricultural pond. These existing control measures would continue to be used under the Project.

The exposed active mining areas of the site are hard bedrock with limited potential for erosion. Most of the other exposed areas that are not actively being mined are covered with a layer of rock that reduces the potential for erosion. To further minimize the potential for erosion and control the sediment that may be transported by runoff, the following Best Management Practices (BMPs) have been and would continue to be implemented at the site:

- the site will be graded to direct storm water away from areas with high erosion potential.
- the site plan configuration and gradient will provide for low-velocity, non-scour conditions at the desilting basing prior to discharge to the pond.
- sand or gravel bags will be used, as needed, to prevent erosion and retain water on site.
- the desilting basin will be maintained to capture sediment.

2.6.14 Water Use and Supply

Non-potable water is provided by an existing agricultural irrigation pond, which is fed from the Camarillo Sanitary District Plant through an existing pipeline. Recycled water is drawn from the irrigation pond and held in a 12,000-gallon water tank. Water trucks, used for dust suppression, are filled continually throughout the day. A 5,000-gallon water tank, located near the crushing plant, is filled daily. This tank feeds the spray bars located on the crushing and sorting plant. There are five additional 3,000-gallon tanks located on the western portion of the site to provide water to existing agricultural operations.

Current water consumption directly attributable to existing operations is approximately 27.9 acre-feet per year (AFY) and uses approximately 30,000 gallons of water per day for onsite operations. Operations under the Project would use the same water sources and would use up to approximately 87,000 gallons of recycled water a day with total annual water use for operations of approximately 83.5 AFY.

Under the Project, the Applicant would use an onsite water well to provide potable water to service the 24-hour security trailer and restrooms. It is estimates that up to 1,500 gallons of water a month would be used from the well for these potable uses. Bottled water is currently, and would continue to be, used for employees located in other areas of the site.

2.6.15 Wastewater

The existing operation includes three existing portable restroom facilities – two near the Scale House and a third near the crushing/sorting plant. Under the Project, the existing facilities would continue to be used or a new onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) would be installed to service the proposed 24-hour security trailer. The Project would also include installation of an 8-foot by 20-foot structure that would house two (2) unisex restrooms, one (1) sink, and one (1) shower to be serviced by the OWTS.

2.6.16 Lighting

Under existing operations with operational hours between 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM operational lighting is not uses. For operations under the Project during non-daylight periods, a single light would be used at the scale house and up to four portable light plants would be used at various locations on the Project site. Additionally, on-road trucks with headlights would operate in the scale area and loading equipment (including two front end loaders and one excavator used for loading rip-rap) would be periodically operated near the scale house, plant and mining areas. Under the Project, this additional lighting would be used during non-daylight morning hours after 5:30 AM and non-daylight evening hours until 10:00 PM. Additionally, these lights would also be operated overnight up to 60 days per year when 24-hour operations occur.

2.6.17 Solid Waste

Solid waste and recycle collection services are provided at the site by E. J. Harrison for trash and recycling service and would continue under the Project. The Project would not change the amount of solid waste generation or increase demand for collection or disposal services.

2.6.18 Reclamation Plan

The approved Reclamation Plan specifies an end use of "open space and wildlife habitat", which require the replanting of vegetation over the mined areas. At present, there has been no reclamation of any portion of the Project site.

The proposed amended Reclamation Plan would require that the mined lands be reclaimed to a combination of Open Space and Agriculture. "Open space" is proposed as the end use for benched portions of the reclaimed quarry site that would not be able to support agriculture. Agriculture is proposed as the end use for the remaining areas. The bench surfaces would be re-vegetated with native species compatible with the surrounding area and the floor would be vegetated with an agricultural grazing crop to support cattle. A map of the proposed Reclamation Plan areas is provided in Figure 2-4.

Processing equipment not required for reclamation would be removed from the site, and buildings and fixtures that are not included in reclamation would also be removed. Ground water wells, water pipelines and related utilities associated with grazing and future agricultural production would be left in place. Any road base or similar material that would not be used for post-reclamation agricultural operations would be removed as part final reclamation.

2.7 SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND PROPOSED CHANGES

Table 2-3, "Comparison of Existing Conditions and Proposed Project," provides a summary comparison of existing conditions and the Project areas and operations.

Table 2-3. Comparison of Existing Conditions and Proposed Project

Mining Facility Component or Activity	Existing	Proposed	Change
CUP Area	111.5 acres	204.4 acres	Increase of 93 acres
Mining Area and Facilities	56.6 acres (mining area) 5.9 acres (facilities) 62.5 acres (total)	172.8 acres (mining and facilities)	Increase of 110.3 acres
Reclamation End Use	Open Space	Open Space and Agriculture	Addition of Agriculture for end use of pad areas
Annual Production	86,000 tons (permitted) 20,900 tons (baseline / 10-year average)	468,000 tons	382,000-ton increase from permitted 447,000-ton increase from baseline
Maximum Production / Shipments Per Operating Day	1,500 tons	1,500 tons	No change
Surface Mining and Processing Methods	Blasting, sorting, processing/crushing, and stockpiling.	Blasting, sorting, processing/crushing, and stockpiling.	No change
Structures and Equipment	Aggregate processing facilities, mobile equipment, bunkers, scale/scalehouse, storage, etc.	Aggregate processing facilities, mobile equipment, bunkers, scale/scalehouse, storage, etc.	No change
Soil Imports/Exports	None	Up to 100,000 cubic yards per year	New component of operations and reclamation
Concrete and Asphalt Recycling	None	Up to 30,000 cubic yards per year	New component of operations
Hours of Operation – Mining Excavation and Processing	Mon. – Sat. 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM	Mon. – Sat. 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM	No change
Hours of Operation: Water Truck Use, Equipment Fueling; Arrivals and Departures of Aggregate, Recycle, and Soil Haul Trucks	Mon. – Sat. 7AM – 4PM	Mon. – Sun. 4:30AM – 10PM	Add Sundays Add 4:30AM – 7AM Add 4PM – 10PM
Maximum Daily Haul Truck Traffic (combined aggregate, soil, and concrete/asphalt)	120 one-way trips (60 truckloads per day)	120 one-way trips (60 truckloads per day)	No change

2.8 PERMITS AND APPROVALS

Table 2-4, "Regulatory Permits and Other Approvals," provides a preliminary listing of the anticipated permits and other regulatory approvals that may be needed for implementation of the Project, in addition to Ventura County approvals. Additional approvals may be needed and existing approvals and regulatory requirements applicable to the existing operation would require extension or continuation for operations under the Project.

Table 2-4. Regulatory Permits and Other Approvals

Agency	Potential Regulatory Approvals	Required for
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit (as applicable)	Discharge of dredge/fill material into jurisdictional waters of the U.S.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Section 7 (or Section 10) incidental take permit	Take of federally listed Threatened or Endangered species.
California Department of Fish and Wildlife	California Endangered Species Act incidental take permit	Activity where a listed candidate, threatened, or endangered species under California Endangered Species Act may be present on the Project site.
	Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement	Change in natural state of stream (includes road or land construction across a natural streambed).
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit, Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit (Section 402 of the Clean Water Act)	Stormwater discharges associated with construction activities (if not covered by General Industrial Activity Storm Water permit).
	General Industrial Activity Storm Water Permit (Section 402 of the Clean Water Act)	Stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity.
	Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures (SPCC) plan (Health and Safety Code 25270 et seq.; 40 CFR Part 112.)	Underground storage of petroleum of 42,000+ gallons. Above-ground storage with 10,000+ gallons; or any spill affecting surface waters, single tank of 600 gallons or 1,320 total.
	Waste Discharge Requirements (Water Code 13000 et seq.)	Discharge of waste that might affect surface or groundwater quality.
	Section 401 Water Quality Certification	Required for projects needing a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permit; certification verifies that the project does not violate State water quality standards.

CHAPTER 3 – ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATIONS

SECTION 3.1 – INTRODUCTION TO IMPACT ANALYSIS

SECTION 3.1–INTRODUCTION TO IMPACT ANALYSIS

Sections 3.2 through 3.14 of this Environmental Impact Report (EIR) document the resource impact analyses conducted for the Project. This Section 3.1 provides an overview of the approach to the impact analysis, describes the resource section format and impact terminology used in this document, explains the approach used for establishing the existing conditions baseline, presents an index of the sections of the EIR in which various resource topics are addressed, and discusses projects considered in the cumulative impact analyses.

3.1.1 Approach to the Environmental Analysis and Mitigation Measures

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines require analysis of environmental impacts caused by a proposed project. All phases of a proposed project, including planning, acquisition, development and operation, are evaluated in the analysis. CEQA Guidelines §15126.2 states that:

> An EIR shall identify and focus on the significant effects of the proposed project on the environment. In assessing the impact of a proposed project on the environment, the Lead Agency should normally limit its examination to changes in the existing physical conditions in the affected area as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, or where no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced. Direct and indirect significant effects of the project on the environment shall be clearly identified and described, giving due consideration to both the short-term and long-term effects. The discussion should include relevant specifics of the area, the resources involved, physical changes, alterations to ecological systems, and changes induced in population distribution, population concentration, and the human use of the land (including commercial and residential development), health and safety problems caused by the physical changes, and other aspects of the resource base such as water, historical resources, scenic quality, and public services. The EIR shall also analyze any significant environmental effects the project might cause or risk exacerbating by bringing development and people into the area affected. …

The specific methodologies used for analyzing Project impacts are discussed in each resource section. In general, the approach for the resource analyses consisted of determining existing conditions (discussed further at Section 4.1.3, "Existing Conditions Baseline," below), and considering the changes to these conditions that would occur as a result of the Project.

The analyses utilize information from a variety of sources including existing literature, field studies, and technical reports prepared for the Project by the Applicant and its consultants and prepared by the County and its EIR consultants. Technical studies prepared by the Applicant's consultants were peer reviewed by the County and its EIR consultant to determine suitability for use in preparing the EIR. Citations to literature and technical studies that contributed to the EIR are provided throughout this EIR, and a full list of references is provided in Chapter 7, "References."

According to Section 15126.4 of the CEQA Guidelines, an EIR should describe feasible measures that could minimize significant adverse impacts (§15126.4(a)(1)) and measures that are fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally binding instruments (§15126.4(a)(2)). Mitigation measures are not required for effects that are found to be less than significant. CEQA defines mitigation as measures that:

- avoid the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action;

- minimize impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation;
- rectify the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the impacted environment;
- reduce or eliminate the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the project; or
- compensate for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

Mitigation measures are identified in this EIR for significant and potentially significant impacts (see definitions below). The discussion of each significant or potentially significant impact summarizes the recommended mitigation and provides a conclusion with regard to whether the mitigation measure would reduce the impact to less than significant.

Mitigation measures adopted by the County if the Project is approved will be included in a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) that provides the full text of each mitigation measure, specifies the parties responsible for implementing and funding each measure, and identifies the agency or other party responsible for monitoring, verifying and documenting that measures have been or are being implemented.

3.1.2 Resource Section Content and Impact Terminology

Sections 3.2 through 3.13 of this EIR each address a resource topic for which one or more impacts are evaluated. Each section contains subsections that describe the environmental setting, regulations associated with the resource topic, criteria and thresholds used for determining impact significance, Project-specific impacts and associated mitigation measures, and cumulative impacts.

This EIR uses the following terminology to denote the significance of environmental impacts of the Project:

- **No impact** indicates that the Project would not have any direct or indirect effects on the environmental resource issue;
- A **less than significant impact** is one that would not result in a substantial adverse change in the environmental resource. These impacts, while adverse, are not of a sufficient magnitude, intensity, or duration to disrupt the environment, and have no serious consequences. A less than significant impact does not require mitigation;
- A **significant impact** is one that would result in a substantial adverse change in the environment. Pursuant to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, mitigation measures or alternatives to the Project must be provided in an attempt to reduce the magnitude of significant impacts (PRC §21002 and 14 CCR §15002(a)(3)). Mitigation measures are recommended in this EIR, when feasible, to avoid or reduce significant impacts;
- A **potentially significant impact** is one that would be considered a significant impact as described above; however, the occurrence of the impact cannot be immediately determined with certainty. For CEQA purposes, a potentially significant impact is treated in this EIR as if it were a significant impact and mitigation measures are recommended, when feasible, to avoid or reduce potentially significant impacts; and
- A **significant and unavoidable impact** is one that would result in a substantial adverse effect on the environmental resources that cannot feasibly be mitigated to a less-than-significant level. Any significant or potentially significant impacts identified that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level are deemed to be significant and unavoidable, even with implementation of all feasible mitigation.

3.1.3 CEQA Baseline Considerations

The impact analyses in this EIR consider the Project impacts in terms of changes to existing "baseline" conditions. The Pacific Rock Quarry is an existing operation with mining, aggregate processing, and related activities at the site. These ongoing activities, including aspects that have resulted in and/or continue to result in environmental effects (e.g., air pollutant emissions, noise, etc.) are a component of the CEQA baseline appropriate for consideration in the impact analysis. CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a) states:

> An EIR must include a description of the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project. This environmental setting will normally constitute the baseline physical conditions by which a lead agency determines whether an impact is significant. The description of the environmental setting shall be no longer than is necessary to provide an understanding of the significant effects of the proposed project and its alternatives. The purpose of this requirement is to give the public and decision makers the most accurate and understandable picture practically possible of the project's likely near-term and long-term impacts.
>
> 1) Generally, the lead agency should describe physical environmental conditions as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, or if no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced, from both a local and regional perspective. Where existing conditions change or fluctuate over time, and where necessary to provide the most accurate picture practically possible of the project's impacts, a lead agency may define existing conditions by referencing historic conditions, or conditions expected when the project becomes operational, or both, that are supported with substantial evidence. In addition, a lead agency may also use baselines consisting of both existing conditions and projected future conditions that are supported by reliable projections based on substantial evidence in the record.
>
> 2) A lead agency may use projected future conditions (beyond the date of project operations) baseline as the sole baseline for analysis only if it demonstrates with substantial evidence that use of existing conditions would be either misleading or without informative value to decision-makers and the public. Use of projected future conditions as the only baseline must be supported by reliable projections based on substantial evidence in the record.
>
> 3) An existing conditions baseline shall not include hypothetical conditions, such as those that might be allowed, but have never actually occurred, under existing permits or plans, as the baseline.

Although the CEQA Guidelines reference conditions "as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published," court decisions have recognized that the baseline for ongoing mining operations can reflect the fluctuating production of a mining operation and that it may be appropriate for a lead agency to consider historical production levels in determining the appropriate baseline. The resource evaluations in this EIR consider and describe the CEQA baseline conditions associated with the particular resource and assess the Project impacts against the baseline conditions. When uncertainties regarding baseline conditions exist, this EIR uses a conservative[1] baseline. Several aspects of site conditions and ongoing operations relate to the definition of baseline conditions depending on the particular resource topic being evaluated. Each resource section discusses the existing site conditions and operational baseline relevant to the particular impact being analyzed.

[1] As used in this EIR, a "conservative" approach to the analysis, including the determination of baseline conditions, is one that tends to overestimate as opposed to underestimate Project impacts.

One of several baseline considerations in this EIR is the quantity of annual export of aggregate associated with the existing operation. Under SMARA and the County's surface mining regulations, Mining Operation Annual Reports must be prepared and submitted to the County and the Division of Mine Reclamation (DMR) by the Operator (e.g., Applicant) each year. Review of annual reports and information provided by the Applicant for the period 2002 through 2017 indicate that the existing operation's annual production[2] has ranged from a high of 161,780 tons in 2005 to a low of 3,329 tons in 2014. Such fluctuation is not uncommon for surface mining operations which produce and sell aggregate based on market demand and other factors. In consideration of these fluctuations, the County determined that the appropriate baseline for annual export of aggregate for the evaluation in this EIR is the annual average of reported production during the 10-year period prior to circulation of the 2017 notice of preparation (NOP) for this EIR (i.e., 2008 through 2017). Table 3.1-1, "2008 – 2017 Reported Annual Production," provides a summary of the reported annual production at Pacific Rock Quarry for this period. As shown in the table, the average production during this period is approximately 20,911 tons and, for this EIR, the rounded value of 20,900 tons is used to represent the existing operation's baseline aggregate exports.

Table 3.1-1. 2008 – 2017 Reported Annual Production

Year	Reported Production (Tons)
2017	28,933
2016	24,742
2015	29,862
2014	3,329
2013	17,607
2012	36,740
2011	31,127
2010	16,632
2009	7,854
2008	12,281
Annual Average	**20,911**

3.1.4 Index of Resource Topics

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines includes environmental checklists identifying potential impact issues associated with 20 different resource topics recommended for consideration when conducting an initial study. The 2011 Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) identifies 60 individual resources topics for consideration when conducting an initial study for a proposed project. The County adopted the Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) in 1992, and comprehensively revised the ISAG in April 2011. The ISAG provides guidance intended to inform the public, project applicants, consultants, and County staff of the threshold criteria and standard methodology used in determining whether a project could have significant effects on the environment under CEQA. In the Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020) in September 2020, the County adopted several policies and programs that direct revisions to the 2011 ISAG, but the ISAG has not yet been revised. Therefore, this EIR considers both the

[2] The quantity of aggregate produced onsite in any given year may vary from the quantity of aggregate exported from the site during that same year. The County considers the reported annual production as representative of the amount of aggregate exported from the site. When applicable to the analyses, and as discussed in more detail in Section 3.4, "Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases," the air quality and GHG evaluation distinguishes between the quantity of onsite aggregate production and the quantity of aggregate exported from the site.

2011 ISAG as well as relevant goals and policies of the Ventura County 2040 General Plan as relevant for consideration for this environmental review of the Project. Sections 3.2 through 3.13 of this EIR provide additional discussion of the relevant criteria for each as of these items as related to the resource subject of the section and as related to individual impacts discussed in each section. In some instances, it was determined during preparation of this EIR that the Project would not have the potential to result in impacts associated with certain CEQA and/or ISAG resource topics. Section 3.14 provides a summary explanation of the issues eliminated from further analysis.

Table 3.1-2, "Index to EIR Section for CEQA and ISAG Resource Topics," provides an index listing the section of this EIR in which CEQA and ISAG resource topics are addressed.

Table 3.1-2. Index to EIR Section for CEQA and ISAG Resource Topics

Resource Topic	Section of EIR
CEQA APPENDIX G ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLISTS	
Aesthetics	3.2
Agriculture / Forestry Resources	3.3
Air Quality	3.4
Biological Resources	3.5
Cultural Resources	3.6
Energy	3.12
Geology/Soils	3.7
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	3.4
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	3.11
Hydrology/Water Quality	3.10
Land Use / Planning	3.13
Mineral Resources	3.14
Noise	3.8
Population / Housing	3.14
Public Services	3.14
Recreation	3.13
Transportation	3.9
Tribal Cultural Resources	3.6
Utilities / Service Systems	3.14
Wildfire	3.11
VENTURA COUNTY ISAG	
1. Air Quality	3.4
2a. Water Resources - Groundwater Quantity	3.10
2b. Water Resources - Groundwater Quality	3.10
2c. Water Resources - Surface Water Quantity	3.10
2d. Water Resources - Surface Water Quality	3.10
3a. Mineral Resources - Aggregate	3.14
3b. Mineral Resources - Petroleum	3.14
4. Biological Resources	3.5
5a. Agricultural Resources - Soils	3.3
5b. Agricultural Resources - Land Use Incompatibility	3.3
6. Scenic Resources	3.2
7. Paleontological Resources	3.7
8a. Cultural Resources - Archaeological	3.6
8b. Cultural Resources - Historic	3.6

Resource Topic	Section of EIR
9. Coastal Beaches and Sand Dunes	3.14
10. Fault Rupture Hazard	3.7
11. Ground Shaking Hazard	3.7
12. Liquefaction Hazards	3.7
13. Seiche and Tsunami Hazards	3.7
14. Landslide/Mudflow Hazard	3.7
15. Expansive Soils Hazards	3.7
16. Subsidence Hazard	3.7
17a. Hydraulic Hazards – Non-FEMA	3.10
17b. Hydraulic Hazards – FEMA	3.10
18. Fire Hazards	3.11
19. Aviation Hazards	3.11
20a. Hazardous Materials/Waste – Materials	3.11
20b. Hazardous Materials/Waste – Waste	3.11
21. Noise and Vibration	3.8
22. Daytime Glare	3.2
23. Public Health	3.11
24. Greenhouse Gases	3.4
25. Community Character	3.13
26. Housing	3.14
27a(1). Transportation & Circulation - Roads and Highways - Level of Service (LOS)	3.9
27a(2). Transportation & Circulation - Roads and Highways - Safety and Design of Public Roads	3.9
27a(3). Transportation & Circulation - Roads & Highways – Safety & Design of Private Access	3.9
27a(4). Transportation & Circulation - Roads & Highways - Tactical Access	3.9
27b. Transportation & Circulation - Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities	3.9
27c. Transportation & Circulation - Bus Transit	3.9
27d. Transportation & Circulation - Railroads	3.9
27e. Transportation & Circulation - Airports	3.9
27f. Transportation & Circulation - Harbor Facilities	3.9
27g. Transportation & Circulation - Pipelines	3.9
28a. Water Supply - Quality	3.10
28b. Water Supply - Quantity	3.10
28c. Water Supply - Fire Flow Requirements	3.10
29a. Waste Treatment & Disposal Facilities – Individual Sewage Disposal Systems	3.11
29b. Waste Treatment & Disposal Facilities – Sewage Collection/Treatment Facilities	3.14
29c. Waste Treatment & Disposal Facilities - Solid Waste Management	3.14
29d. Waste Treatment & Disposal Facilities - Solid Waste Facilities	3.14
30. Utilities	3.14
31a. Flood Control Facilities/Watercourses – Watershed Protection District	3.10

Resource Topic	Section of EIR
31b. Flood Control Facilities/Watercourses – Other Facilities	3.10
32. Law Enforcement/Emergency Services	3.11
33a. Fire Protection Services - Distance and Response	3.11
33b. Fire Protection Services – Personnel, Equipment, and Facilities	3.11
34a. Education - Schools	3.14
34b. Education - Public Libraries	3.14
35. Recreation Facilities	3.13

3.1.5 Cumulative Projects

CEQA requires evaluation of a proposed project's potential to combine with impacts of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable projects in a manner that could result in cumulatively considerable impacts. Each resource topic evaluated in Sections 3.2 through 3.13 include a section discussing the potential for the Project's individual impacts to result in or contribute to cumulative impacts. Table 3.1-3, "Recently Approved and Pending Projects," are identified in the Ventura County Planning Division's pending and recently approved project lists within a 5-mile radius of the Project site. These projects are considered further in the cumulative impacts analyses in Sections 3.2 through 3.13.

Table 3.1-3 Recently Approved and Pending Projects

Permit Number	Status	Permit Description
RECENTLY APPROVED PROJECTS		
PL17-0062	Approved 8/13/2018	Conditional Use Permit to reestablish the approval of Conditional Use Permit LU08-0049 which was previously approved, but never inaugurated. The request is described below: The applicant is requesting approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow "Festivals, Animal Shows and Similar Events, Temporary Outdoor," specifically temporary, outdoor wedding events at a 2.86 acre property within the Open Space (160-ac. min) Zone and the Open Space General Plan land use designation addressed as 1735 Pancho Road. Other types of events shall be permitted such as birthday or anniversary celebrations, non-profit and charity events, and other similar temporary events. The weddings and similar events shall be located in the northeast area on the property using approximately one acre of the 2.86 acre parcel Wedding and similar events shall be limited to Saturdays and Sundays, from 12:00 PM to 10:00 PM, for a maximum of 35 days within any given calendar year. The days and hours of operation shall apply to all wedding and similar event ceremonies and receptions. Each event host will have use of the property beginning at 8:00 AM the day of the event ending at 11:00 PM. Event music shall be limited to Saturdays and Sundays, from 12:00 PM to 10:00 PM. A maximum of 150 guests/attendees shall be allowed. Catered food shall be prepared off-site and transported to the project site for each event. Portable restrooms shall be provided on-site for each event. The event host may have pre-event set-up activities such as catering and event supply deliveries the day before the event and post-event clean-up activities such as clean-up and dismantling of equipment. The pre-event and post-event activities shall be limited to not more than four hours within the timeframe of 8:00am to 9:00pm. If pre-event or post-event activities require more than four (4) hours to

Permit Number	Status	Permit Description
		complete on a given day, the day shall apply towards the maximum allowed 35 days within a calendar year. The event venue may allow one (1) event rehearsal the day prior to the event. Event rehearsals may be held prior to the event. The rehearsal shall be limited to two (2) hours maximum, shall have no food, drink, music or other entertainment, and shall be limited to a maximum of twenty (20) attendees. If pre-event and rehearsal activities cumulatively require more than four (4) hours to complete on a given day, the day shall apply towards the maximum allowed 35 days within a calendar year. Parking for the wedding party and wedding coordinators/vendors shall be provided on-site by 24 parking spaces. For 150 wedding attendees, a total of 75 parking spaces are required. The parking will be provided off-site and attendees shall be shuttled in by a trolley owned by the applicant. The applicant is proposing a shared parking agreement with the property owner of the parking lot of 809 Calle Plano in the City of Camarillo for Saturdays and Sundays for 120 parking spaces. The trolley will accommodate approximately 40 attendees and it is estimated the total number of trips for the trolley from the parking area to the wedding site shall be four to five round trips, totaling approximately ten trips. The use of permanent buildings or structures shall be limited to the Gazebo and decking and adjacent grass area as the event gathering area; no other permanent buildings or structures shall be used for event activities (e.g., used as changing rooms, bathrooms, or food preparation areas). The events shall utilize outdoor patio lights and amplified music. No additional permanent structures shall be permitted as a result of this use. Temporary structures shall be limited to the on-site placement of portable restrooms, temporary tents, and canopies, and these shall be removed at the end of the event.
PL17-0122	Approved 6/12/18	Minor Modification to Conditional Use Permit 4700 to add phased development at an Agricultural Contractor and Storage Yard commonly known as Trical, Incorporated located on an approximately 30.8 acre property within the Agricultural Exclusive 40-acre minimum zone and the Agricultural General Plan land use designation. Trical, Inc. specializes as a fertilizer and pesticide application service for agricultural operations throughout the region and this facility is mostly used for storage, staging, and equipment repair. The applicant proposes to construct a 4,240-sq. ft. workshop as part of phase I, the demolition of a 7,320 sq. ft. workshop/warehouse as phase 2, and the construction of a new 8,000-sq. ft. workshop as phase 3. As part of phase 3 employees will be moved out of the 4,240-sq. ft. workshop built as phase 1 and convert this building to a warehouse. The 4,240-sq.ft. workshop that represents phase 1 is being constructed with spill containment features and the appropriate fire suppression system so that its conversion to a warehouse can be eased. No plumbing features are proposed within the phase I building as employees will utilize the bathrooms in adjacent buildings. Water to the project site is provided by an onsite private water well with two tanks holding 20,000 gallons of water each providing a reservoir for fire safety. Waste water discharge on the property is accommodated by two on-site septic systems. Access to the site is provided by a 24-ft private driveway that accesses 5th Street directly. The storage yard is secured with a perimeter fence with an electric gate at the driveway. The applicant is also requesting an extension of the Conditional Use Permit term.

Permit Number	Status	Permit Description
PENDING		
PL15-0025	Environmental Document Preparation	The Applicant requests approval of a Conditional Certificate of Compliance/Parcel Map (PM 5948) for a 2.50-acre property. The purpose of the proposed project is to create a legal lot that complies with the Subdivision Map Act and Ventura County Subdivision Ordinance. No new development, grading, or ground disturbance is proposed as part of this project; however, current zoning would allow a single-family residence and an accessory dwelling unit. The proposed project includes a prohibition on development known as a "development restriction" area (e.g., building or structural development, stockpiling materials, grading, and vegetation removal) within a 38,622-square foot area (approximately 0.89 acres) of the subject lot, in order to avoid adverse impacts to biological resources. Access to the north side of the lot is available from Alice Ann Road and to the south side of the lot from La Cam Road. The subject lot is located within the Thousand Oaks Area Plan.
PL16-0082	Environmental Document Preparation	LLA adjustment between two legal lots lot 1 (668-0-080-200), lot 2 (673-0-420-350, 673-0-420-040) lot area per PMW 630. When recorded in PMW 630 for lots where non-conforming. The proposed LLA will have Parcel A cross between OS-20 AC and OS-40 AC and stay non-conforming to OS-40AC. LLA will keep Parcel B non-conforming to OS-40 AC zoning designation.
PL17-0060	Preparation for Hearing	Minor Modification to Conditional Use Permit LU08-0030 for the continued use of seven (7) farm worker dwellings and agricultural accessory buildings that exceed the 20,000 sq. ft. allowed by ministerial permit. The request is for a 20-year permit extension. The previous (expired) permit is CUP4231. The residential structures on the property are not part of this permit.
PL18-0027	Awaiting Resubmittal	Planned Development Permit to retroactively address a grading violation issued in August 1989 John Oquendo; (UN-0013) that was related to the Falconridge Estates development in the La Cam Road area within the Thousand Oaks Area Plan. The principal reason to process this request is to clear the grading violation recorded on APN 668-0-070-265. No development is proposed for the subject property or any of the related parcels within what is commonly known as the Falconridge Estates development. This parcel was part of a larger grading violation and it was determined that a California Environmental Quality Act document needed to be prepared that covers the entire grading that occurred as part of the Falconridge Estates development. A pre-submittal analysis was prepared for the request (AD14-0045) which has been provided.
PL18-0075	Submittal In Progress	Land Conservation Act LCA Contract for APN 163-0-130-340
PL18-0077	Submittal In Progress	Land Conservation Act LCA Contract for APN 163-0-160-135
PL18-0084	Submittal In Progress	Land Conservation Act - New LCA Agricultural contract for Rancho Avita, LLC. 47.25 acre property is located south of Pleasant Valley Road, across from the Camarillo Airport (APN 230-0-051-435). Property is currently being leased and utilized for row crops.
PL18-0085	Submittal In Progress	Land Conservation Act New 10-year LCA Open Space Wildlife Habitat Contract for Fitzgerald Ranches. The 893-acre contract contains 4 lots and is located north of Highway 101 at Camarillo Springs Exit, at the base of the Conejo Grade (APNs 163-0-170-045, 163-0-170-075, 163-0-170-125)

Permit Number	Status	Permit Description
PL18-0086	Submittal In Progress	10-year Open Space Wildlife Habitat LCA Contract for Fitzgerald Ranches. This contract is for Lot 25, 53.04 acres, of the Fitzgerald Ranches APN 163-0-180-055)
Source: County of Ventura, Planning Division Pending Projects. October 1, 2018		

SECTION 3.2 – VISUAL RESOURCES

SECTION 3.2–VISUAL RESOURCES

This section provides an evaluation of potential visual resources impacts of the Project, and addresses impacts associated with views, light, and glare.

3.2.1 Setting

3.2.1.1 Visual Character

The Project site is in unincorporated Ventura County southeast of the City of Camarillo and to the west of the southern portion of the City of Thousand Oaks, as shown on Figure 2-1. The site is located on the north side of the Santa Monica Mountain Range within an area that can be described as a U-shaped bowl at the southwestern base of Conejo Mountain. The site is generally surrounded by hillsides except for the northwest portion of the site which opens toward predominately flat agricultural fields to the northwest. Elevations within the site range from a low of approximately 170 feet above mean sea level (amsl) along the northwestern portion of the site to approximately 950 feet amsl in the eastern portion of the site. Conejo Mountain is northeast of the site and rises to approximately 1,800 feet amsl.

The existing mining operation has resulted in approximately 69 acres of disturbance of areas ranging from approximately 170 feet amsl in the northwest portion of the site to approximately 650 feet amsl in the southeast portion of the site. Mining has resulted in the development of steep slopes mostly devoid of vegetation along the northeastern and eastern perimeters of the existing mine area. Within the mining area below these slopes are a series of relatively level pad areas where processing equipment, equipment storage areas, and aggregate stockpiles are located. These areas are also mostly devoid of vegetation, although sporadic vegetation growth occurs in some portions of the mine area. Aggregate processing facilities, including conveyors, crushers, and screens, are located centrally within the existing mine area at an elevation of approximately 350 amsl. The truck scale, scale house, and equipment storage area are in an approximately 2.5-acre area in the northwestern portion of the site at an elevation of approximately 190 feet amsl.

Other areas of the proposed CUP and mine expansion area outside of the existing mine disturbance area include generally undisturbed open space areas to the north, east, and south of the existing mine area and an approximately 11-acre agricultural area in the southwestern portion of the existing CUP area. The open space areas within the proposed CUP and mine expansion area to the north and east of the existing mined area can be characterized as steeply sloping generally downward toward the mine area with rocky soils or exposed bedrock surfaces and with low to moderate vegetation coverage. (Section 3.5, "Biological Resources," of this EIR provides a more detailed discussion of plant species and habitat types within these areas.) The open space areas to the south of the existing mine area also contain areas of steep slopes but with more varied terrain, drainages, and vegetation coverage.

3.2.1.2 Scenic Highways and Scenic Resource Areas

Ventura County includes roads and highways that have been designated or are eligible for designation as scenic highways or roadways; however, no designated or eligible segments have been identified from which the Project site is visible or that otherwise could be affected by the Project.

3.2.1.3 Views of the Project Site

Views of the Project site are available from various areas that can be generally grouped into the three categories: distant views from the northwest, views from the northwest near the site, and views from the north, east, and south of the site. These areas are discussed in the sections below.

Distant Views from the Northwest

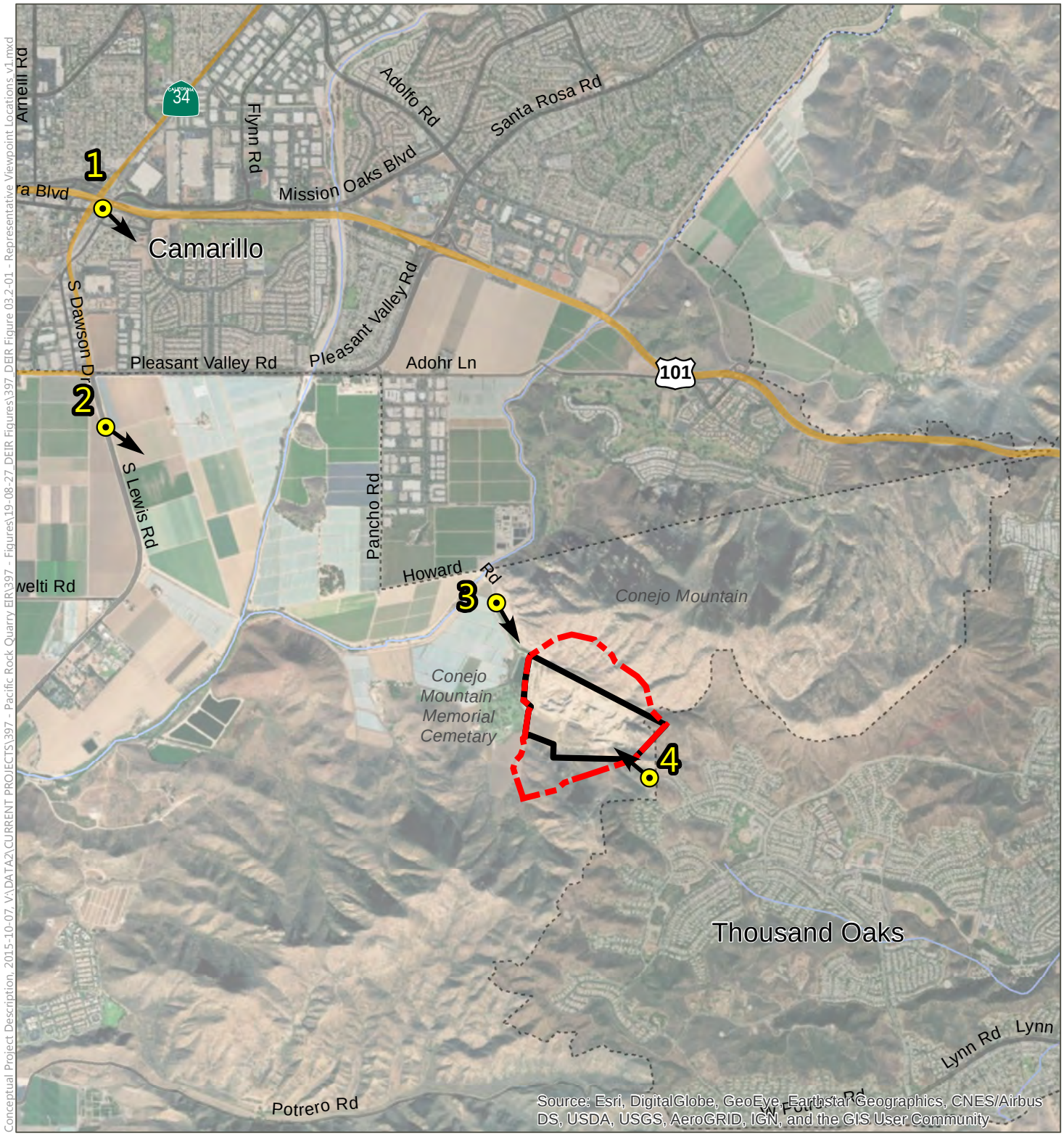
The Project site's location on a generally northwest-sloping hillside results in its visibility from areas to the northwest. The topography of areas to the northwest is generally flat and land uses include agricultural farmland, developed areas (including the City of Camarillo), and public roads and highways (including Highway 101). For this analysis, distant views toward the site from these areas include publicly accessible areas and roads ranging generally from about 0.25 mile to 8 miles from the Project site. The site is also visible from private properties within this area, including some residences. Visibility of the site from these areas varies depending on distance and intervening features such as structures, vegetation, and low-lying hills within the otherwise nearly flat areas northwest of the site. Except for agricultural farmlands within about 3 miles of the site, views of the site that would otherwise be available from much of broad area to the northwest are predominantly screened by intervening features. However, there are also several areas from which the site is visible in distance views.

Two view locations were selected to represent and illustrate views of the Project site from the northwest. These locations are identified as Viewpoints 1 and 2 on Figure 3.2-1, "Representative Viewpoint Locations."

Viewpoint 1 is located on southbound Highway 101 (traveling in an easterly directly on this segment of the highway) at the Lewis Road overcrossing. This viewpoint is approximately 3 miles from the Project site. Figure 3.2-2, "Viewpoints 1 and 2 Existing Conditions," includes a photograph taken on September 10, 2019, from Viewpoint 1 toward the Project site. Conejo Mountain and the Santa Monica Mountains ridgeline dominate the far-ground view from this location. Features in the near-ground view including commercial and residential structures and landscape vegetation compose much of the viewshed. Under clear conditions, the existing mine disturbance area is visible from this location as a subordinate feature at the base of the surrounding mountains. Disturbed mining areas are noticeably lighter in color than the surrounding areas due in part to the exposure of smoother rock surfaces without topsoil. Intervening features screen the lower portions of the mine area. As a result of the screening, existing processing facilities and equipment in lower portions of the Project site have very limited or no visibility from Viewpoint 1. Although much of the existing mine area is visible, the mine under existing conditions is not considered to represent a dominant feature or substantially degrade views from Viewpoint 1.

The view from Viewpoint 1 is considered representative of views from other areas along Highway 101 and other areas within approximately 3 to 8 miles west and northwest of the site. Periodic views toward the site occur along an approximately 8-mile segment of southbound Highway 101 (traveling toward the east along this segment) between North Rice Avenue to the northwest to east of Pleasant Valley Road north of the site. Intervening vegetation, structures, sound walls, road signs, and other features screen much of the distant views toward the site from this segment of Highway 101. Although periodic views of the site occur along this segment, the disturbed areas of the site are not dominant in the viewshed.

Viewpoint 2 is located on South Lewis Road south of Pleasant Valley Road, as shown on Figure 3.2-1. This viewpoint is approximately 2.25 miles from the Project site. Figure 3.2-2 includes a photograph taken on September 10, 2019, from Viewpoint 2 toward the site. Conejo Mountain and the Santa Monica Mountains ridgeline dominate the mid-ground view from this location.



Conceptual Project Description, 2015-10-07, V:\DATA2\CURRENT PROJECTS\397 - Pacific Rock Quarry EIR\397 - Figures\19-08-27_DEIR Figures\397_DEIR Figure 03.2-01 - Representative Viewpoint Locations v1.mxd

SOURCES: ESRI World Shaded Relief accessed June 2019, ESRI World Topographic Map accessed June 2019; ESRI World Streetmap, 2009; Adapted by Benchmark Resources in 2019

NOTES: This figure was prepared for land use planning and informational purposes only. The info shown and its accuracy are refelctive of the date the data was accessed or produced.

Proposed CUP Boundary
Existing CUP Boundary
1 Viewpoint Location and Direction
Highway
Major Road
City Boundary

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 2,000 4,000 8,000 Feet

Representative Viewpoint Locations
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.2-1

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VIEWPOINT 1
EXISTING CONDITIONS

VIEWPOINT 2
EXISTING CONDITIONS

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

Viewpoints 1 and 2 Existing Conditions
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.2-2

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Near-ground views are predominated by flat agricultural fields with limited intervening features, although some hills and vegetation are present between this viewpoint and the site. Under clear conditions, the mine disturbance area is visible from this location as a subordinate feature near the base of the surrounding mountains. Although still considered a subordinate feature, the mine site comprises more of the view from Viewpoint 2 and the surrounding areas as compared to more distant views represented by Viewpoint 1.

Disturbed mine surfaces are readily apparent with noticeable contrast with the surrounding hillsides. Much of the contrast is due to the absence of topsoil and vegetation on mined surfaces, and more uniform, angular, and steeper slopes created by mining. Although the mined surfaces are more visible from Viewpoint 2, existing processing facilities and equipment in lower areas of the site have very limited to no visibility due to intervening features. The view from Viewpoint 2 is considered representative of views from other areas south of Highway 101 in agricultural and other less developed areas within approximately 0.25 miles to 3 miles west and northwest of the Project site. Although there are fewer viewers in these areas as compared to the number of motorists along Highway 101 and in the southern portions of the City of Camarillo, view durations are longer and viewer sensitivity is considered higher for areas represented by Viewpoint 2. From these areas, the existing mine disturbance is considered to result in a low to moderate reduction in the quality of views toward the Project site under existing conditions.

Views from the Northwest near the Site

Views toward the Project site from locations northwest of and near the site include those from Howard Road approaching the site and the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery, which is located immediately adjacent to the west of the site. Viewpoint 3 is located along Howard Road approaching the site and the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery. Figure 3.2-3, "Viewpoints 3 and 4 Existing Conditions," includes a photograph taken on September 10, 2019, of the view toward the site from Viewpoint 3. As shown in the photograph, the view toward the site at this location includes foreground vegetation along the left side of Howard Road. The trees provide substantial screening of the lower-elevation areas of the site. Upper elevations of portions of the site, including mined surfaces and stockpiles processing equipment, are visible above and beyond the trees. The middle- to far-ground views predominately include relatively undisturbed and vegetation-covered slopes of the Santa Monica Mountains. Views of disturbed areas of the site along other portions of this segment of Howard Road and at the entrance of the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery are also fully or partially screened by intervening foreground vegetation and/or earthen berms. Where gaps in vegetation exist, views of the Project site, including existing disturbed areas and equipment and equipment storage, are visible. Increased visibility of the site occurs from within the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery property. Although not accessed for this analysis, review of aerial photograph, topographical maps, views from the Project site looking toward the cemetery, and other information are sufficient to determine the site's visibility from the cemetery. The visibility of the existing mine site (including disturbed areas, stockpiles, vehicles and equipment) is considered to present a low adverse effect on the quality of views from this segment of Howard Road due to the substantial screening provided by intervening vegetation and berms, but the visibility of the existing mine site is considered to present moderate to high adverse effect on the quality of views toward the site from the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery.

Views from Areas North, East, and South of the Site

Views from areas adjacent to the north, east, and south of the site include open space with publicly accessible trails and may also include views from the yards or interior areas of some residences in the Dos Vientos community southeast of the site. This assessment did not include reconnaissance of views from within private residential properties. However, this analysis recognizes that portions of the Project site

may be visible from yards or interior areas of residential properties nearest the southeastern site of the site. The viewshed descriptions and analysis of views from publicly accessible open space areas in the same vicinity is considered representative of views from these private residential properties.

Viewpoint 4 is located southeast of the site approximately 900 feet from the existing mine disturbance area and approximately 300 feet from the proposed CUP boundary. Viewpoint 4 is in publicly accessible open space at an elevation of approximately 910 feet amsl. Figure 3.2-3 includes a photograph taken on September 10, 2019, of the view toward the site from Viewpoint 4. As shown in the photograph, portions of the existing mine disturbance areas and equipment are visible in right of center of the photograph. An existing concrete pad on the Project site is visible in the center of the photograph. To the left of the concrete pad is a drainage and beyond the drainage is an approximately 11-acre agricultural area. The Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery is further beyond the onsite agricultural area and is distinguishable by its green lawns and tree cover. The offsite pond from which operational water is obtained is visible in the photograph to the right of the cemetery property. The viewshed from Viewpoint 4 includes more distance views of agricultural lands. Although the Viewpoint 4 photograph in Figure 3.2-3 is toward agricultural plains northwest of the site, surrounding views from Viewpoint 4 and the surrounding areas this viewpoint represents are dominated by near-ground views of the Santa Monica Mountains sloping down to the agricultural plains below. The western slopes and summit of Conejo Mountain is to the right in Figure 3.2-3, and also represents a dominant feature in the visible landscape. Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery and agricultural fields beyond represent a substantial cultural modification to the landscape but are a part if the existing visual character of the area and are not considered to adversely reduce the overall quality of the viewshed. A high-voltage electrical transmittal line (not visible in the Viewpoint 4 photograph) passes east-west through the open space area. The transmission line includes pairs of steel-lattice towers spaced at intervals ranging from approximately 300 feet 1,800 feet, with dirt roads providing access to the towers.

Surface disturbance and visible processing facilities and equipment associated with the existing mining operation contrasts with the visual character of surrounding areas and are considered to present a moderate reduction in the quality of views from open space and other areas to the north, east, and south of the site under existing conditions.

3.2.1.4 Existing Sources of Light and Glare

The existing operation is permitted to operate between the hours of 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM. Nighttime operations are permitted by the existing CUP under limited circumstances but do not occur under normal operations. Existing lighting at the site is limited to that needed for safety and security purposes.

3.2.1.5 Regulatory Framework

Ventura County General Plan

Goal COS-3 of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the "Ventura County 2040 General Plan" (Ventura County, 2020) is, "To preserve, protect, and enhance the unique scenic resources in Ventura County, and ensure access to scenic resources within Ventura County for present and future generations." General Plan policies associated with visual resources potentially applicable to the Project are identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR.

VIEWPOINT 3
EXISTING CONDITIONS

VIEWPOINT 4
EXISTING CONDITIONS

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

Viewpoints 3 and 4 Existing Conditions
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.2-3

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3.2.2 Impact Analysis

3.2.2.1 Significance Thresholds

This section provides an overview of the impact criteria and significance thresholds used to evaluate Project impacts associated with visual resources based on the Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) and Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

Ventura County ISAG

The Ventura County ISAG identifies the following criteria associated with visual resources.

ISAG 6—Scenic Resources:

1. A project has the potential to create a significant impact to scenic resources if it:
   a. is located within an area that has a scenic resource that is visible from a public viewing location; and,
   b. would physically alter the scenic resource either individually or cumulatively when combined with recently approved, current, and reasonably foreseeable future projects; or
   c. would substantially obstruct, degrade, or obscure the scenic vista, either individually or cumulatively when combined with recently approved, current, and reasonably foreseeable future projects.
2. Any project that is inconsistent with scenic resources policies of the Ventura County General Plan Goals, Policies and Programs or policies of an applicable Area Plan, will result in a potentially significant environmental impact.

ISAG 22—Daytime Glare:

Creation of a new source of disability glare or discomfort glare for motorists travelling along any road of the County Regional Road Network.

CEQA

In addition to the ISAG items listed above, this impact assessment considers criteria identified in the "Aesthetics" checklist in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, which includes assessing if the Project would:

a) have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista;
b) substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway;
c) in non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings; or
d) create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

3.2.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact VIS-1: The Project would result in an adverse change to the visual character of the site and surrounding areas. (ISAG 6, CEQA a, b, c) (Significant)

The Project would result in expansion of the existing mine and mine-related facilities disturbance area from approximately 62.5 acres to a total of up to 172.8, resulting in approximately 110.3acres of

additional disturbance over an approximately 30-year period. Mining and aggregate processing activities including drilling and blasting, materials movement on the site, the continued presence of aggregate processing facilities, and increase in haul truck activity associated with increased hours and days of production and exports would increase the visibility of the operation and change the visual character of the site. Additional proposed activities including receipt and processing recycled asphalt and concrete, and receipt, stockpiling, and placement of imported fill would also result in increased haul truck and equipment on the site during operations and an estimated 5-year reclamation period following the completion of mining.

Mining and subsequent reclamation would result in fill placement and revegetation for agricultural/grazing use of two nearly level pad areas at approximately 300 feet amsl and 200 feet amsl in the central portion of the proposed mine area and a third pad area at approximately 150 feet amsl, as shown on Figure 2-5 in Chapter 2. Following the completion of mining and under reclaimed conditions, these pad areas would be surrounded on the north, east, and south sides by the mined area perimeter slopes with the benched configuration illustrated in the cross-section diagrams in Figure 2-5. Perimeter areas would have an overall slope ratio of 1 horizontal to 1 vertical (1H:1V) that would be created by a series of approximately 50-foot tall vertical walls separated by approximately 50-foot wide horizontal benches. Although the vertical highwall sections in the Figure 2-5 cross-section exhibits appear as smooth vertical surfaces, the surfaces would be created by blasting and would not be entirely uniform. Uppermost elevations of mined areas under the proposed Project would range from approximately 600 – 800 feet amsl along the northern and eastern perimeter of the mine area and 450 – 550 feet amsl along the southwestern perimeter.

Reclamation would provide for vegetation of level surfaces, including the three pad areas and perimeter benches. Vertical perimeter highwalls would not be revegetated. At the completion of mining, mining vehicles, equipment and the scale house and scale would be removed from the site. Roads and drainage features would remain for use in the agricultural operation and access to the property.

The effect of changes in visual appearance of the site as a result of expanded mining areas and eventual reclamation of the site would vary depending on the viewer location, distance, angle of view, time of day (sunlight angle and brightness), and atmospheric conditions that influence visibility. In general, the additional mining and expansion of disturbed areas is considered to be the most influential aspect of potential visual impact associated with the Project. Mining and processing activities would be similar to those that currently occur under existing baseline conditions, but would occur on more days due to increased production and would also be permitted to occur during early morning and evening hours and on Sundays. These activities, when occurring, would detract from the visual quality of views toward the site from surrounding areas, with the severity of the effect largely depending on the distance between individual viewers and the activity.

To illustrate the anticipated changes resulting from the proposed expansion of mining, photographic simulations were prepared for this analysis to show conditions at the completion of mining and following reclamation.

Simulations were prepared by creating a three-dimensional (3D) model of the topography for the Project site and surrounding area, using AutoCAD topography of the proposed mine plan. An image of the 3D model was then created from each viewpoint's location. Each resulting image was aligned with the relevant existing conditions photograph. For both the mined and reclaimed conditions

simulations, surface colors and textures were added to represent visible surfaces. Colors and textures were created using extracted sections from photographs of existing mined slopes at the site, shading consistent with the direction of sunlight at the time of existing conditions photograph was taken, and color and texture consistent with anticipated surfaces at the completion of mining and under reclaimed conditions.

Simulations were prepared for each of the viewpoints discussed in Section 3.2.1.1. Figures 3.2-4 through 3.2-7 each include the existing conditions photograph, a simulation of the view at the completion of mining, and a simulation of the view following reclamation for Viewpoints 1 through 4, respectively. The simulated view at the completion of mining is presented to reflect worst-case conditions showing the maximum mined disturbance without vegetation cover that would be provided through the proposed revegetation plan. The simulated view for reclaimed conditions demonstrates the anticipated coverage and softening of otherwise denuded mine surfaces that would be achieved through the proposed backfill and revegetation of lower pad areas of the site. The sections below discuss visual impacts anticipated for each of the three categories of view locations discussed in Section 3.2.1.1.

Impacts to Distant Views from the Northwest

As discussed in Section 3.2.1.1, Viewpoints 1 and 2 were selected as representative locations to assess anticipated visibility and changes in the visual character of views toward the site from the northwest. Figure 3.2-4, "Viewpoint 1 – Existing Conditions and Simulated Views," illustrates the anticipated views toward the site from Viewpoint 1 on Highway 101 at Lewis Road approximately 3.0 miles from the site. As shown in the "Completion of Mining" simulation, expanded mining would result in increased visibility of disturbed areas, both in width and height. The visibility of disturbed mining areas would expand to approximately three times the width of the existing disturbance to the right (southwest) base of Conejo Mountain. Within the overall scale of the lower slopes of the Santa Monica Mountains in this area, the visible disturbance area would create a moderately dominant and inconsistent character of the hillsides as mining of the full proposed mine expansion area is completed. As shown in the "Reclaimed" simulation, the view from Viewpoint 1 would be similar to that at the completion of mining. The revegetation plan does not propose to establish vegetation on vertical mined slopes, which compose most of the disturbed areas in the view. Although some vegetation is anticipated to establish within the vertical walls, the cover would be limited and would provide minimal softening of the views as compared to conditions at the completion of mining. From the most distant areas northwest of the site, including those available periodically from the approximately 8-mile segment of Highway 101 and limited areas with unscreened views within the City of Camarillo, views toward the site would be similarly affected as those illustrated for Viewpoint 1.

Figure 3.2-5, "Viewpoint 2 – Existing Conditions and Simulated Views," illustrates the anticipated views toward the site from Viewpoint 2 along South Lewis Road south of Pleasant Valley Road, approximately 2.25 miles from the site. As shown in the "Completion of Mining" simulation, expanded mining would result in increased visibility of disturbed areas, both in width and height. As with the view from Viewpoint 1, the visibility of disturbed mining areas would expand to approximately three times the width of existing the existing disturbance to the right (southwest) base of Conejo Mountain. Within the overall scale of the lower slopes of the Santa Monica Mountains in this area, the visible disturbance area would create a moderate to highly dominant and inconsistent character of the hillsides as mining of the full proposed mine expansion area is completed. As evident in comparing the Viewpoint 2 simulation with the Viewpoint 1 simulation, the visibility and dominance of the site within the viewshed increases as the view location is nearer to the site. Thus, the visible changes to the site

and the effect of those changes on the quality of views from areas south of Camarillo nearer to the site would be more substantial than at more distant view locations. As shown in the "Reclaimed" simulation, the view from Viewpoint 2 would be similar to that at the completion of mining.

As discussed, the revegetation plan does not propose to establish vegetation on vertical mined slopes, which compose most of the disturbed areas in the view. Although some vegetation is anticipated to establish within the vertical walls, the cover would be limited and would provide minimal softening of the views as compared to conditions at the completion of mining. Lower pad areas that will be backfilled and revegetated for reclamation would be partially visible from Viewpoint 2 and surrounding areas, but would not substantially change the site appearance as compared to conditions at the completion of mining.

From areas northwest of the Project site, the flat pads and lower slope areas within the site are less visible and screened or partially obscured by on- and off-site vegetation and intervening topography; however, the higher elevations of the mine expansion areas would be largely visible. The visibility of the site and dominance in the view increases for view locations nearer to the site. Although the existing mining operation and disturbance area detracts from the existing visual quality of existing views of the site from areas northwest of the site, the expanded mine disturbance area would result in a moderate to high degree of adverse visual change in the quality of views toward the site from areas northwest of the site.

Views from the Northwest near the Site

As discussed in Section 3.2.1.1, Viewpoint 3 was selected as a representative location to assess anticipated visibility and changes in the visual character of views toward the site from areas near the northwest side of the site. Figure 3.2-6, "Viewpoint 3 – Existing Conditions and Simulated Views," illustrates the anticipated views toward the site from Howard Road approaching the site entrance and the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery. As with existing conditions, trees along the roadside screen much of the lower portions of the mining and processing area. Visible equipment, disturbed areas, and activities related to operations within these lower areas would continue to be partially visible within these views. As shown in the "Completion of Mining" simulation, expanded mining would result in increased visibility of disturbed areas that would be visible from portions of Howard Road and from the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery where not screened by intervening vegetation or berms. The visibility of disturbed mining areas would expand to approximately three times the width of the existing disturbance area and would increase the height of disturbance. From areas near the site, the additional mined areas would be dominant within the overall scale of the view toward the mountains in this area, and the visible disturbance area would adversely modify the character of the hillsides. As shown in the "Reclaimed" simulation, the view from Viewpoint 3 would be similar to that at the completion of mining. The revegetation plan does not propose to establish vegetation on vertical mined slopes, which compose most of the disturbed areas in the view. Although some vegetation is anticipated to establish within the vertical walls, the cover would be limited and would provide minimal softening of the views as compared to conditions at the completion of mining. Revegetation of backfilled pad areas would be visible along some portions of Howard Road and the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery, where not screened by intervening vegetation or berms.

Although the existing mining operation and disturbance area detracts from the existing visual quality of existing views of the site from areas near the northwest side of the site, the visibility of the additional mined areas and their dominance in the viewshed is considered to be a high degree of adverse visual change in the quality of views toward the site from nearby areas northwest of the site.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

COMPLETION OF MINING

RECLAIMED

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

Viewpoint 1 – Existing Conditions and Simulated Views
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.2-4

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

COMPLETION OF MINING

RECLAIMED

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

Viewpoint 2 – Existing Conditions and Simulated Views
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.2-5

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EXISTING CONDITIONS

COMPLETION OF MINING

RECLAIMED

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

Viewpoint 3 – Existing Conditions and Simulated Views
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.2-6

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Views from Areas North, East, and South of the Site

As discussed in Section 3.2.1.1, Viewpoint 4 was selected as a representative location to assess anticipated visibility of the proposed mine expansion area and changes in the visual character of views toward the site from areas adjacent to the north, east, and south of the site. These areas include open space with publicly accessible trails and views from a limited number of residential properties in the Dos Vientos community southeast of the site. Figure 3.2-7, "Viewpoint 4 – Existing Conditions and Simulated Views," illustrates the anticipated views toward the site from Viewpoint 4.

As shown in the "Completion of Mining" simulation, portions of the expanded mine disturbance area would be visible, including areas mined in the southern portion of the site that would remove the lower slopes of the ridgeline spur located south of the 11-acre agricultural portion the site. The steeper slopes and benched areas and the lower pad area of this area, as well as the other two pad areas to the north that would result from the proposed mine plan would be visible as disturbed areas. This disturbance and the uniform, angular benched and pad areas created by mining would be inconsistent with the visual character of surrounding hillside areas and would substantially modify the existing character of the viewshed. The additional mined areas would be dominant within the overall scale of the view down the slopes below this viewpoint and views toward Conejo Mountain. As shown in the "Reclaimed" simulation, vegetation of backfilled pad areas would reduce the visibility of lower bench areas which would marginally lessen the adverse change in viewshed character as compared to conditions following the completion of mining. The revegetation plan does not propose to establish vegetation on vertical mined slopes, which compose substantial portions of the disturbed areas in the view. It is anticipated that some plants would establish on the bench walls over time, however, the vegetation cover would likely be much less than surrounding undisturbed aeras and would provide minimal softening of the views of vertical slope areas as compared to conditions at the completion of mining.

Although the existing mining operation and disturbance area detracts from the visual quality of existing views of the site from areas adjacent to the north, east, and south of the site, the visibility of the additional mined areas and their dominance in the viewshed is considered to be a high degree of adverse visual change to the existing character of views from these areas. Revegetation of pad areas would reduce the visual effects of mining as vegetation becomes established over time. However, the disturbance and angular features created by mining and the substantially reduced vegetation density and cover as compared to existing conditions and adjacent areas would result in a permanent substantial reduction in the visual quality of the viewshed.

While views from the areas represented by Viewpoint 4 vary depending on the viewer location in areas north, east, and south of the site, the general overall effect of expanded mining would be similar to that demonstrated by Viewpoint 4. The changes in the visual character of the Project site resulting from the proposed mine expansion would represent a high degree of adverse change in visual quality.

Impact Significance and Mitigation

As discussed in the sections above, the Project would result in adverse changes in the visual character of the site. The changes would adversely affect views from distant and nearby areas northwest of the site and views from areas to the north, east, and south of the site. In consideration of the anticipated moderate to high degree of adverse change in the visual character of the site and effects on view quality, this impact is considered significant.

Mitigation measure MM VIS-1 would reduce the effects of the Project on visual character by requiring the Permittee to reduce the angular and benched appearance of final mined slopes and promote revegetation of these areas at final reclamation, to the extent feasible. MM-VIS 1(2) would further reduce visual effects by requiring increased vegetation screening along the western perimeter of the site. Reducing the benched appearance of the mine perimeter and providing for revegetation of these areas with native plants would reduce the distinctive angular appearance of the benching and would achieve an appearance more closely resembling that of adjacent hillside areas. Retaining the existing plantings along Howard Road and planting additional trees along the western perimeter of the site, including areas adjacent to Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery, would provide for partial screening of processing and mining activities, especially within the lower elevations of the site. The extent to which MM VIS-1(1) would feasibly reduce the benched appearance and increase revegetation has not been determined. Bench design modifications will require mine planning and geotechnical considerations that have not been performed for this EIR. Therefore, although it is anticipated that implementation of MM VIS-1 would reduce the severity of Impact VIS-1, the evaluation in this EIR cannot definitively conclude that the impact would be reduced to a level of less than significant. No additional feasible mitigation to reduce this impact has been identified. Impact VIS-1 is therefore considered significant and unavoidable for the purposes of the analysis in this EIR. (Note that Chapter 4 of this EIR evaluates alternatives to the proposed Project and that evaluation considers an alternative that would reduce the mine area as compared to the proposed Project. As discussed in Chapter 4, a reduced mine area would reduce the visual impact of the proposed Project.)

Mitigation for Impact VIS-1:

MM VIS-1:

1. *To the extent feasible, the Permittee shall reduce the angular and benched appearance of final mined slopes and shall promote revegetation of benches and slopes at final reclamation. The Permittee shall revegetate benches and slopes, where feasible, with native plantings with a goal of achieving plant coverage of similar types and densities of surrounding areas.*
2. *The Permittee shall prepare and implement a landscape screening plan that provides for installation and maintain of vegetative plantings along the western perimeter of the site sufficient to screen views of the site from adjacent areas to the extent feasible.*

Impact VIS-2: Project lighting for operations during early morning and evening periods would create the potential for light spill and night sky lighting. (CEQA d) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Existing operations are permitted to occur between 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM, and under normal operations do not require lighting. The existing CUP provides for limited periodic 24-hour operations and, during such periods, temporary lighting may be used under existing conditions. Under the proposed Project, mining and processing operations would continue to be limited to occur between 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM, as with existing operations. However, the Project would increase the permitted hours for equipment fueling and truck activity, including loading, and entrance and exiting the site, allowing these activities to occur between 5:30 AM and 10:00 PM. When operating at night, a single light would be used at the scale house and up to four portable light plants would be used at various locations on the Project site. Vehicles would also operate on the site during these non-daylight periods, including on-road trucks with use of headlights in the scale area and loading equipment (i.e., two front end loaders and one excavator) for loading rip-rap near the scale house, at the processing plant, and in mining areas.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

COMPLETION OF MINING

RECLAIMED

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

Viewpoint 3 – Existing Conditions and Simulated Views
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.2-7

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Project lighting would create the potential for light pollution, including light shine on adjacent properties and night sky lighting that could adversely affect nighttime views and create a nuisance to neighboring properties. Lighting impacts of the Project are considered potentially significant.

As discussed in more detail in Section 3.5, Project lighting could also adversely affect wildlife and wildlife movement and habitat in the County-designated Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors overlay zone within which the Project site is located. Mitigation measure MM BIO-7 in Section 3.5 requires that the Project comply with County zoning code sections 8104-7.7 and 8109-4.8 which are associated with the County-designated Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors overlay zone. These code sections provide specific provisions and requirements for lighting and allow for deviations for surface mining operations, requiring that outdoor lighting utilized for surface mining operations, "may deviate from the [otherwise applicable] standards and requirements and shall be specified in a lighting plan approved by the County during the discretionary permitting process for the subject facility or operation. All such lighting shall be designed and operated to minimize impacts on wildlife passage to the extent feasible." Mitigation measure BIO-7 requires preparation of wildlife movement mitigation plan and requires that the plan include provisions to ensure that lighting avoids or minimizes light spill onto adjacent areas and is directed away from wildlife movement areas to the extent feasible while still providing for the necessary site access restrictions necessary for public safety and security. While MM BIO-7 is intended to address potential impacts on wildlife, its provisions for lighting would also serve to reduce potential lighting effects on nighttime views and nuisance to neighboring properties.

Mitigation measure MM VIS-2 is identified here to provide specific provisions to minimize potential night sky lighting and potential light nuisance impacts of the Project. Implementation of MM VIS-2, with consideration also of the provisions of MM BIO-7 lighting requirements, is considered sufficient to reduce Impact VIS-2 to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact VIS-2

MM VIS-2. *Prior to the installation or use of stationary or portable lighting for operations under the Project, the Permittee shall prepare and submit a lighting plan to the County for review and approval. The lighting plan shall be sufficient to avoid or minimize night-sky lighting and offsite light shine and spill to the extent feasible and in compliance with the specific requirement of this measure. The lighting plan shall specify the locations of lights (including areas within which use of portable lights is planned) and shall identify the types of luminaries, direction of aim, and shielding, and shall provide evidence that the following requirements are achieved:*

a) All outdoor luminaires shall be fully shielded, directed downward, and installed and maintained in such a manner to avoid light trespass beyond the lot line in excess of those amounts set forth in Section 8109-4.7.4(i) of the Ventura County zoning ordinance.

b) The correlated color temperature of each outdoor luminaire, with the exception of security lighting, shall not exceed 3,000 Kelvin.

c) Each outdoor luminaire, except those used for security lighting, shall have a maximum output of 850 lumens.

d) Outdoor luminaires used for security lighting shall not exceed a maximum output of 2,600 lumens per luminaire.

e) All outdoor luminaires, other than security lighting and during permitted periodic 24-hour operations, shall be turned off when not in use and between the hours of 10:00 PM and 5:30 AM.

f) Vehicle operation and parking provisions shall require headlights to be turned off when not in use.

Impact VIS-3: The Project could result in daytime glare. (CEQA d, ISAG 22) (Less than Significant)

As described in the Ventura County ISAG (Ventura County, 2011), glare is intense light that is blinding or discomforting to humans. Glare has a potentially significant effect on motorists. Conditions that create Daytime Glare are typically caused by the reflection of sunlight from highly reflective surfaces at or above eye level. Daytime Glare is caused by the reflective surfaces of buildings with materials such as metal or glass that lead to disability glare or discomfort glare for motorists travelling on County's roads where the traffic volumes/speeds are generally high (e.g. Regional Road Network). According to the Ventura County ISAG, a proposed project would have a significant glare impact if it would create a new source of disability glare or discomfort glare for motorists travelling along any road of the County Regional Road Network.

The Project would involve the continued use of mining, aggregate processing, and related facilities and equipment at the site. The Project would also involve additional equipment associated with proposed concrete and asphalt recycling and fill import and backfill operations. Equipment and features at the site could create or increase the potential for limited and localized glare, including reflections from windows and windshields. However, the Project site is not near a County road with either high speeds or high traffic volumes and would not have the potential to adversely affect motorists on such roads. Therefore, the Project impact associated with daytime glare is considered less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact VIS-3

No mitigation required.

3.2.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

Visual resources impacts associated with the Project are project-specific impacts associated with additional site disturbance and activities and potential increases in lighting at the Project site. Visual resources impacts that could be associated with the projects identified in Section 3.1.5 of this EIR, would be localized and not contribute to visual impacts of the proposed Project. Thus, the Project would not create the potential for substantial cumulative effects associated with visual resources.

3.2.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies, including those associated with visual resources, is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

SECTION 3.3 – AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

SECTION 3.3–AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

This section provides an evaluation of potential impacts of the Project associated with agricultural and forestry resources.

3.3.1 Setting

3.3.1.1 Agriculture

Agricultural Production and Farmland

Ventura County is one of the principal agricultural counties in California, and much of the area north and west of the Project site is in agricultural production. The Project site includes 4.1-acres of Prime Farmland and 6.7-acres of Unique Farmland, as designated by the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (DOC, 2017), as shown on Figure 3.3-1, "Project Area Farmlands."

According to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program, *Prime Farmland* has the best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date. *Unique Farmland* consists of lesser quality soils used for the production of the state's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may Include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

The Prime Farmland and Unique Farmland portions of the site are contiguous in an approximately 11-acre area located within the existing CUP area but outside of the existing mine area boundary, as illustrated on Figure 2-3 in the area labeled "Agricultural Field." Under existing conditions, this area of the site is used for agricultural production.

California Land Conservation Act Contracts

As discussed further in Section 3.3.1.3, the California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (commonly referred to as the Williamson Act) is intended to preserve open spaces and agricultural land, and is a state program, administered by individual counties, that allows agricultural landowners to pay reduced property taxes in return for their contractual agreement to retain the land in agricultural and open space uses. Approximately 127,000 acres in Ventura County are under LCA contracts. (DOC, 2015)

The existing CUP area comprises 111.5 acres of the approximately 241.5-acre APN 234-0-060-220. The Project proposes to expand mining within additional portions of APN 234-0-060-220 and within a portion of APN 234-0-060-190 which is adjacent to the north of the existing quarry. Based on review of the California Department of Conservation, Division of Land Resource Protection's, "Ventura County Williamson Act FY 2015/2016" (DOC, 2015) and review of the "Ventura County 2019 Land Conservation Contracts" map (Ventura County, 2019), the existing CUP parcel (APN 234-0-060-220) is subject to an LCA contract. As discussed above, the Project site contains approximately 11 acres of farmland that is currently used for agriculture and is within APN 234-0-060-220, and the remainder of APN 234-0-060-220 includes areas of open space as well as the active mining, processing, and other mine-related uses of the existing operation.

3.3.1.2 Forestry Resources

Section 3.5, "Biological Resources," of this EIR discusses existing vegetation cover within the Project site, including trees. As noted in Section 4.5, three heritage coast live oak trees and 25 southern California black walnut trees are located within the study area. Impacts to these trees in terms of habitat and compliance with the County's Tree Protection Ordinance are addressed and mitigation is provided in Section 3.5 (see Impact BIO-6 and MM BIO-6). These trees are not considered "forestry resources" for the purposes of CEQA analysis and no other trees, woodlands, or forestry resources are located within the Project site.

3.3.1.3 Regulatory Framework

California Land Conservation Act Contracts

The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (commonly referred to as the Williamson Act) is intended to preserve open spaces and agricultural land, and is a state program, administered by individual counties, that allows agricultural landowners to pay reduced property taxes in return for their contractual agreement to retain the land in agricultural and open space uses. The program is a voluntary, locally administered program that offers preferential property taxes on lands which have enforceable restrictions on their use. LCA contracts are between counties and qualifying landowners and restrict contracted land to agricultural or open space uses for 10 years. The contract renews automatically annually unless the nonrenewal process is initiated by either party to the contract. Under nonrenewal, the contract term is not renewed and property taxes incrementally rise over the remaining 9 years of the contract term until reaching the full, unrestricted tax rate. Once the contract expires, the land is no longer restricted to agricultural or open space uses. Cancellation of the contract is also available to the landowner in limited circumstances.

SMARA

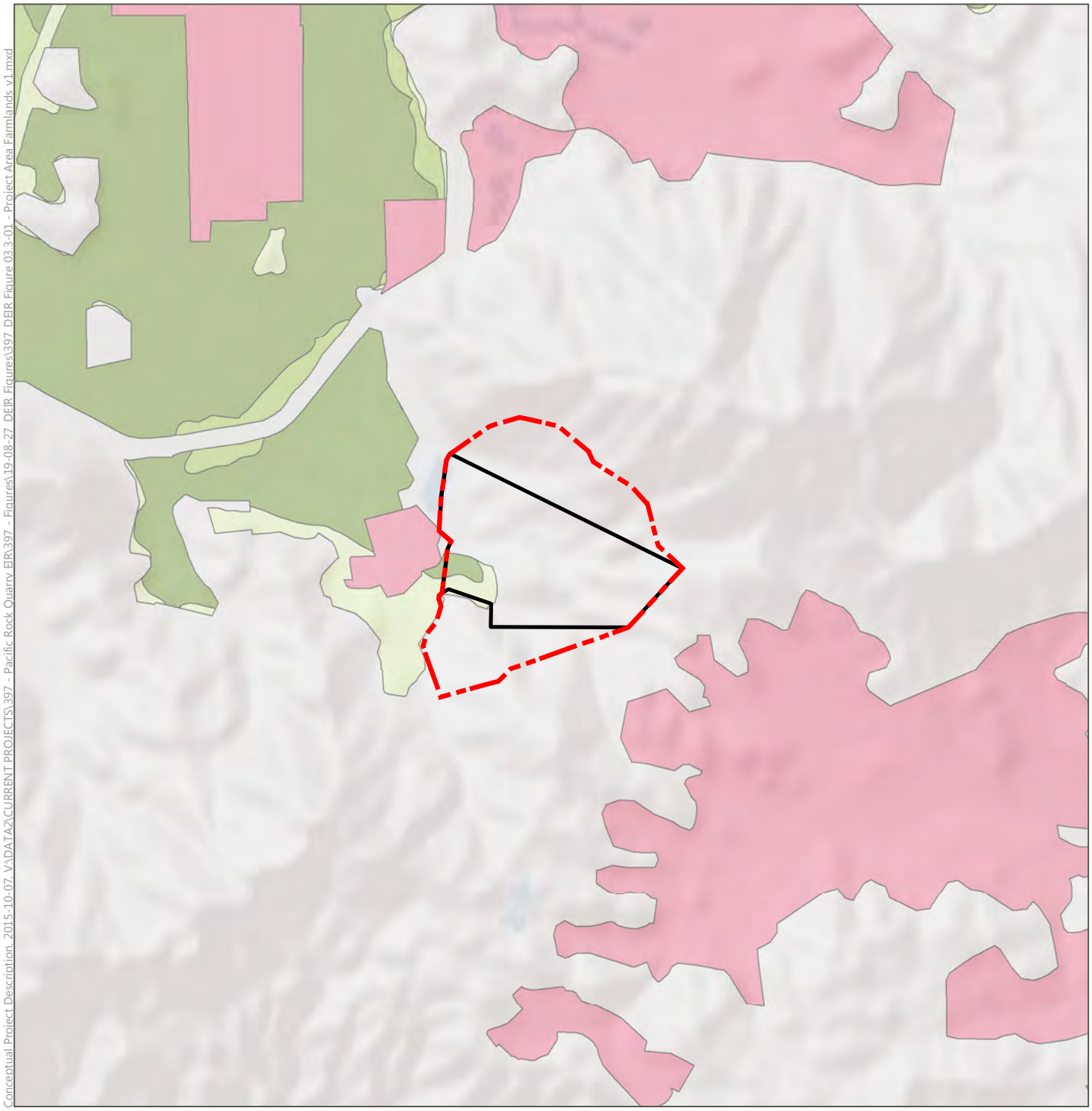
The following Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) regulations provide performance standards required for prime and other agricultural lands.

Section 3707. Performance Standards for Prime Agricultural Land Reclamation

In addition to the standards for topsoil salvage, maintenance, and redistribution, the following standards shall apply to mining operations on prime agricultural lands where the approved end use is agriculture:

(a) Mining operations which will operate on prime agricultural lands, as defined by the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, shall return all disturbed areas to a fertility level as specified in the approved reclamation plan.

(b) When distinct soil horizons are present, topsoil shall be salvaged and segregated by defined A, B, and C soil horizons. Upon reconstruction of the soil, the sequence of horizons shall have the A atop the B, the B atop the C, and the C atop graded overburden.



SOURCES: California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program data download for Ventura County, 2016 version; ESRI World Shaded Relief accessed June of 2019; ESRI World Streetmap, 2009; Adapted by Benchmark Resources in 2019

NOTES: This figure was prepared for land use planning and informational purposes only. The info shown and its accuracy are refelctive of the date the data was accessed or produced.

- Proposed CUP Boundary
- Existing CUP Boundary
- Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- Unique Farmland
- Urban and Build-up Land
- Other Land

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

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Project Area Farmlands

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

Figure 3.3-1

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(c) Reclamation shall be deemed complete when productive capability of the affected land is equivalent to or exceeds, for two consecutive crop years, that of the premining condition or similar crop production in the area. Productivity rates, based on reference areas described in the approved reclamation plan, shall be specified in the approved reclamation plan.

(d) Use of fertilizers or other soil amendments shall not cause contamination of surface or ground water.

Section 3708. Performance Standards for Other Agricultural Land

The following standards shall apply to agricultural lands, other than prime agricultural lands, when the approved end use is agriculture.

In addition to the standards for topsoil salvage, maintenance, and redistribution, non-prime agricultural lands shall be reclaimed so as to be capable of sustaining economically viable production of crops commonly grown in the surrounding areas.

Ventura County Programs

Greenbelt Agreements

Greenbelts are voluntary agreements between the Board of Supervisors and one or more City Councils regarding development of agricultural and/or open space areas beyond city limits. They protect open space and agricultural lands and reassure property owners located within these areas that lands will not be prematurely converted to agriculturally incompatible uses. Cities commit to not annex any property within a greenbelt while the Board agrees to restrict development to uses consistent with existing zoning.

Land Conservation Act Contracts (LCAs)

As discussed above, LCA contracts between local agencies and property owners offer property tax reductions as an incentive to maintain agricultural use.

Ensure Long-term Water Availability for Agriculture

Ventura County manages or participates in water resources development and conservation programs to ensure long-term water availability for agriculture. These water conservation plans and programs include the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency, the 2014 Integrated Regional Water Management Plan and the 2015 Agricultural Water Management Plan.

Ventura County Right-to-Farm Ordinance

The County of Ventura adopted a Right-to-Farm Ordinance for the purpose of preserving and protecting existing agricultural operations. The ordinance applies to properties located in unincorporated areas of the County, and is intended to protect farmers in established farming areas from legal action that new uses or new residents in nearby settings may take against effects associated with customary, daily agricultural activities, including dust, odor, noise, and pesticide use. The Ventura County Right-to-Farm Ordinance states:

> *No agricultural activities, operations, or facilities which are consistent with [the zoning ordinance] and the [Ventura County] General Plan and with proper and accepted customs and standards as established and followed by similar agricultural operations in the same locality, shall be or become a nuisance, private or public, due to any changed condition in or*

about the locality, after the agricultural uses have been in operation for more than one year if they were not a nuisance at the time they began.

Ventura County General Plan

The Agricultural Element of the "Ventura County 2040 General Plan" (Ventura County, 2020) contains seven goals and several related policies associated with the promotion and protection of agricultural land uses and economy in the County. General Plan policies associated with agricultural resources potential applicable to the Project are identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR.

3.3.2 Impact Analysis

3.3.2.1 Significance Thresholds

This section provides an overview of the impact criteria and significance thresholds used to evaluation Project impacts associated with agricultural and forestry resources based on the Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) and Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

Ventura County ISAG

The Ventura County ISAG (Ventura County, 2011) includes the following issues pertaining to agricultural resources with a summary of the significance thresholds identified in the ISAG.

ISAG 5a – Agricultural Resources—Soils:

Any project that would result in the direct and/or indirect loss of soils designated Prime, Statewide Importance, Unique or Local Importance will have an impact; specific thresholds for significance are identified in the ISAG based on acreages of farmland lost dependent upon the General Plan land use designation.

ISAG 5b – Agricultural Resources—Land Use Incompatibility:

Impacts based on distance between new non-agricultural structures or common lot boundary line and offsite classified farmland. Distances are 300 feet if vegetative screening is not present and 150 feet if vegetative screening is present.

CEQA

In addition to thresholds for the ISAG items listed above, this impact assessment considers the evaluation criteria identified in the agricultural and forestry resources checklist in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. These criteria address whether a project would:

a) convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use;
b) conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract;
c) conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestland (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g));
d) result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use; or

e) involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use.

As discussed above, trees on the Project site are not considered "forestry resources" for the purposes of CEQA analysis and no other trees, woodlands, or forestry resources are located within the Project site. Therefore, CEQA items "c" and "d" above have been eliminated from further consideration.

3.3.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact AG-1: The Project could result in the conversion or otherwise adversely affect Prime Farmland and Unique Farmland. (ISAG 5a, CEQA a) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The Project site includes 4.1-acres of Prime Farmland and 6.7-acres of Unique Farmland, as designated by the California Department of Conservation Important Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (2016). These portions of the site are contiguous in an approximately 11-acre agricultural area within the existing CUP area but outside of the existing permitted mine area boundary. Although the 11-acre agricultural area is within the proposed mine expansion area boundary; no surface mining activities are proposed in this area under the proposed Project. The proposed Project includes development of a berm along the western perimeter of the 11-acre agricultural portion of the site to capture and redirect stormwater runoff.

Development of the berm and related stormwater conveyance channel within or adjacent areas of the 11-acre agricultural area on the site containing Prime Farmland and/or Unique Farmland, could remove minor amounts of these areas from production, but would not substantially reduce or otherwise effect the amount or quality of this farmland. Mining and reclamation activities are not proposed within the 11-acre agricultural area, therefore, no mine-related disturbance of soils or other adverse effects on the farmland production quality of this portion of the site are anticipated. Therefore, the potential for the Project to remove Prime Farmland or Unique Farmland from production or otherwise adversely affect these lands is considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation for Impact AG-1:

No mitigation required.

Impact AG-2: The Project would continue and expand mining activities in areas subject to a Land Conservation Act contract. (CEQA b) (Less than Significant)

The parcel within which the existing CUP and mining operation is located (APN 234-0-060-220) is subject to a Land Conservation Act (LCA) contract between the County and the landowner. The Project proposes to expand mining within additional portions of APN 234-0-060-220 and to expand the mining operation within a portion of APN 234-0-060-190 which is adjacent to the north of the existing quarry. APN 234-0-060-190 is not subject to an LCA contract. The existing mining operation is considered a compatible use under the LCA contract for APN 234-0-060-220. Expansion of mining operations into additional areas of APN 234-0-060-220 would be consistent with existing operations and the expansion of similar activities within the parcel and ultimate reclamation of the site to land suitable for agricultural and open space would not conflict with the existing LCA contract. The Project would also introduce a concrete and asphalt recycle operation. Since the recycle operation

would be located within the existing CUP boundary and within the area of existing disturbance and production facilities associated with the existing operation, the recycle operation would not present a new conflict with the existing LCA. For these reasons, the County finds that the Project would be consistent with the existing LCA contract on APN 234-0-060-220 and the Project impact associated with LCA contract compatibility is considered less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact AG-2:

No mitigation required.

3.3.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

The Project would not reduce or otherwise adversely affect agricultural or forestry resources in a manner that would create the potential for substantial cumulative effects. Under reclaimed conditions, the Project would ultimately increase the amount of agricultural lands within the County through the creation of grazing lands within portions of the site that are currently disturbed by mining or are non-agricultural open space areas.

3.3.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies, including those associated with agricultural and forestry resources, is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

SECTION 3.4 – AIR QUALITY AND GREENHOUSE GASES

SECTION 3.4–AIR QUALITY AND GREENHOUSE GASES

This section presents an evaluation of potential air quality and greenhouse gas emissions-related impacts of the Project. An "Air Quality, Health Risk, and Climate Change Impact Assessment," (Sespe, 2019b) was submitted with the application and was peer reviewed by the County's EIR consultant Benchmark Resources and subconsultant Environmental Science Associates (ESA) for adequacy to inform the analysis in this EIR. As determined necessary as a result of the peer review, a technical memorandum entitled "Supplemental Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Evaluation and Health Risk Screening for the Pacific Rock Quarry Conditional Use Permit Modification Application" (ESA, 2020) was prepared to provide supplemental information for this EIR. Information from the Sespe assessment and the ESA technical memorandum is incorporated herein, and the documents are included as Appendices B-1 and B-2 of this EIR, respectively.

3.4.1 Setting

3.4.1.1 Climatological Setting

The Project site is located within Ventura County, which is in the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB). The SCCAB includes all of Ventura, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. The Project area is characterized by cool winters and warm, dry summers tempered by cooling sea breezes. Summer, spring and fall weather is generally a result of the movement and intensity of the semi-permanent high pressure area located several hundred miles to the west. Marine influences generally predominate during this period and cause afternoon onshore flow and evening off-shore flow. Winter weather is generally a result of the size and location of low pressure weather systems originating in the north Pacific Ocean. In Ventura County, ozone generally reaches peak levels by mid-afternoon and, along with ozone precursors, is often blown inland by the prevailing winds. The smoggiest days tend to occur from May through October (smog season) when high temperatures and stable atmospheric conditions produce conditions conducive to ozone formation and buildup (VCAPCD 2017).

The climate monitoring station located at the Camarillo Airport is approximately 4.5 miles west of the Project site and considered representative of conditions at the Project site. Climate data from the Camarillo Airport station is summarized here. The maximum average monthly temperature is 79.8 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) in September, and the minimum average monthly temperature is 44.7 °F in December and February. The average monthly maximum precipitation is 1.22 inches in March, and the average monthly minimum is 0.00 inches in August, with an average annual precipitation of 11.00 inches (based on National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration 2010-2019 averages [https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cdo-web/search]). The average monthly wind speed varies from 4.6 mph in September to 6.8 mph in January. However, winter storms can bring short periods of much higher wind speeds. The typical wind direction is from the northwest and west. Onshore wind flow is prevalent, with a marine cloud layer causing heavy fog (visibility one-quarter mile or less) an average of 29.4 days per year.

3.4.1.2 Ambient Air Quality

Ambient Air Quality Standards

Air quality in Ventura County is directly related to emissions and regional topographic and meteorological factors. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) has divided the state into regional air basins, such as the SCCAB, according to topographic air drainage features. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) and CARB classify an area as attainment, unclassified, or nonattainment depending on whether the monitored ambient air quality data shows compliance, insufficient data available, or non-compliance

with the ambient air quality standards, respectively. The National and California Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS and CAAQS) relevant to the Project are provided in Table 3.4-1, "Relevant Ambient Air Quality Standards."

Table 3.4-1. Relevant Ambient Air Quality Standards

Pollutant	Averaging Time	California Standards	Federal Standards (NAAQS)	
			Primary	***Secondary***
Ozone (O_3)	1-hour	0.09 ppm (180 μg/m^3)	–	–
	8-hour	0.070 ppm (137 μg/m^3)	0.070 ppm (137 μg/m^3)	Same as primary
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	24-hour	50 μg/m^3	150 μg/m^3	Same as primary
	Annual	20 μg/m^3	–	–
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)	24-hour	–	35 μg/m^3	Same as primary
	Annual	12 μg/m^3	12.0 μg/m^3	Same as primary
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1-hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m^3)	35 ppm (40 mg/m^3)	–
	8-hour	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m^3)	9 ppm (10 mg/m^3)	–
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	1-hour	0.18 ppm (339 μg/m^3)	0.100 ppm (188 μg/m^3)	Same as primary
	Annual	0.030 ppm (57 μg/m^3)	0.053 ppm (100 μg/m^3)	Same as primary
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	1-hour	0.25 ppm (655 μg/m^3)	0.075 ppm (196 μg/m^3)	–
	3-hour	–	–	0.50 ppm (1,300 μg/m^3)
	24-hour	0.04 ppm (105 μg/m^3)	0.14 ppm (for certain areas)	–
	Annual	–	0.030 ppm (for certain areas)	–

Source: CARB, 2016.
"–" = No standard.
ppm = parts per million.
μg/m^3 = micrograms per cubic meter.

Attainment Status

Ventura County has been designated by the CARB and USEPA as unclassified or in attainment of all criterial ambient air pollutant standards with the exception of:

- Federal 2008 8-hour ozone standard: non-attainment, classified as "serious."
- Federal 2015 8-hour ozone standard: non-attainment, classified as "serious."
- California 1-hour ozone standard: non-attainment.
- California particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM_{10}) standard: non-attainment.

According to the baseline (2012) air pollutant emissions inventory presented in the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (VCAPCD)'s 2016 Air Quality Management Plan (VCAPCD, 2017), mobile sources (on-road vehicles, trains, aircraft, marine vessels, farm equipment) account for about 45 percent of the reactive organic compound (ROC) emissions and 88 percent of the oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) emissions in the County.

Air Pollutants and Health Effects

The following provides a discussion of the formation and health effects of regulated criteria pollutants and other pollutants of concern that are relevant to the Project. Relevant Project emissions include criteria

pollutants, ozone precursor, and toxic air contaminant emissions associated with primarily diesel-fueled heavy-duty equipment and vehicle combustion exhaust and fugitive dust particulate matter. Another NAAQS and CAAQS regulated pollutant includes lead. However, the Project would not include sources of lead emissions. Unleaded transportation fuels have virtually eliminated lead emissions from transportation fuel combustion such as would occur from the Project. As a result, lead emissions are not further evaluated in this EIR.

Criteria Pollutants and Ozone Precursors

Ozone—Ozone (O_3) is formed by photochemical reactions between oxides of nitrogen (NO_X) and ROC, rather than being directly emitted. Generally, air districts prioritize NO_X reductions over ROC reductions because NO_X reductions would have greater effect on reducing ozone concentrations and be more protective of public health. O_3 is a pungent, colorless gas typical of photochemical smog. Elevated O_3 concentrations may result in reduced lung function, particularly during vigorous physical activity. This health effect is particularly acute in sensitive receptors such as the sick, the elderly, and young children. O_3 levels peak during summer and early fall.

Breathing ground-level ozone can result in a number of health effects that are observed in broad segments of the population. Some of these effects include induction of respiratory symptoms; decrements in lung function; and inflammation of airways. Respiratory symptoms may include coughing; throat irritation; pain, burning, or discomfort in the chest when taking a deep breath; and chest tightness, wheezing, or shortness of breath. In addition to these effects, evidence from observational studies indicates that higher daily ozone concentrations are associated with increased asthma attacks, increased hospital admissions, increased daily mortality, and other markers of morbidity. The consistency and coherence of the evidence for effects upon asthmatics suggests that ozone can make asthma symptoms worse and can increase sensitivity to asthma triggers.

Particulate Matter—Particulate matter (PM) pollution consists of very small liquid and solid particles floating in the air. Some particles are large or dark enough to be seen as soot or smoke. Others are so small they can be detected only with an electron microscope. Particulate matter is a mixture of materials that can include smoke, soot, dust, salt, acids, and metals. Particulate matter also forms when gases emitted from motor vehicles and industrial sources undergo chemical reactions in the atmosphere. PM_{10} refers to particles less than or equal to 10 microns in aerodynamic diameter. $PM_{2.5}$ refers to particles less than or equal to 2.5 microns in aerodynamic diameter and are a subset of PM_{10}. There are sources of PM_{10} in both urban and rural areas. PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ are emitted from stationary and mobile sources, including diesel trucks and other motor vehicles, power plants, industrial processing, wood burning stoves and fireplaces, wildfires, dust from roads, construction, landfills, and agriculture, and fugitive windblown dust. Because particles originate from a variety of sources, their chemical and physical compositions vary widely. In addition, $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations are highly dependent on several precursors which, like NO_X and ROC for ozone, undergo chemical reactions in the environment that changes them to $PM_{2.5}$. PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ particles are small enough to be inhaled into, and lodge in, the deepest parts of the lung, evading the respiratory system's natural defenses.

Health problems may occur as the body reacts to these particles. Acute and chronic health effects associated with high particulate levels include the aggravation of chronic respiratory diseases, heart and lung disease, and coughing, bronchitis, and respiratory illnesses in children. Recent mortality studies have shown a statistically significant direct association between mortality and daily concentrations of particulate matter in the air. Non health-related effects include reduced visibility and

soiling of buildings. PM_{10} can increase the number and severity of asthma attacks, cause or aggravate bronchitis and other lung diseases, and reduce the body's ability to fight infections. PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ can aggravate respiratory disease, and cause lung damage, cancer, and premature death. Although particulate matter can cause health problems for everyone, certain people are especially vulnerable to adverse health effects of PM_{10}. These "sensitive populations" include children, the elderly, exercising adults, and those suffering from chronic lung disease such as asthma or bronchitis. Of greatest concern are recent studies that link PM_{10} exposure to the premature death of people who already have heart and lung disease, especially the elderly. Acidic PM_{10} can also damage manmade materials and is a major cause of reduced visibility in many parts of the United States.

Carbon Monoxide—Carbon monoxide (CO) is formed by the incomplete combustion of fossil fuels, almost entirely from automobiles. It is a colorless, odorless gas that can cause dizziness, fatigue, and impairments to central nervous system functions. The severity of symptoms due to CO exposure increases with the blood carboxyhemoglobin (COHb) level. The first signs of CO exposure include mild headache and breathlessness with moderate exercise. Continued exposure may lead to more severe headache, irritability, impaired judgment and memory, and rapid onset of fatigue. Persons that may be more sensitive to CO exposure include those having an existing cardiovascular disease or anemia; fetuses of pregnant women; smokers; and persons exposed to methylene chloride.

Nitrogen Oxides—NO_X is a generic term for the mono-nitrogen oxides, which include nitric oxide (NO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). NO is a colorless, odorless gas and NO_2 is a reddish brown gas. NO_X is formed from fuel combustion under high temperature or pressure. NO_X is a primary component of the photochemical smog reaction. It also contributes to other pollution problems, including a high concentration of fine particulate matter, poor visibility, and acid deposition (i.e., acid rain). NO_X decreases lung function and may reduce resistance to infection. Acute exposure to NO_2 may cause pulmonary edema, pneumonitis, and bronchitis. NO_2 is considered a relatively insoluble, reactive gas, such as phosgene and ozone. Once inhaled, NO_2 reaches the lower respiratory tract, affecting mainly the bronchioles and the adjacent alveolar spaces, where it may produce pulmonary edema within hours.

Sulfur Dioxide—Sulfur dioxide (SO_2) is a colorless, irritating gas formed primarily from combustion of fuels containing sulfur. Industrial facilities also contribute to gaseous SO_2 levels. SO_2 irritates the respiratory tract, can injure lung tissue when combined with fine particulate matter, and reduces visibility and the level of sunlight. People with asthma and children are particularly sensitive to and are at increased risk from the effects of SO_2 air pollution.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Diesel Particulate Matter—Diesel particulate matter (DPM) is used as a surrogate for the mixture of compounds in diesel exhaust that have the potential to contribute to mutations in cells that can lead to cancer. These compounds include, but are not limited to, arsenic, benzene, formaldehyde, and nickel. Long-term exposure to diesel exhaust particles poses the highest cancer risk of any toxic air contaminant (TAC) evaluated by the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA). CARB has estimated that about 70 percent of the cancer risk that the average Californian faces from breathing TACs stems from diesel exhaust particles. In a comprehensive assessment of diesel exhaust, OEHHA analyzed more than 30 studies of people who worked around diesel equipment, including truck drivers, railroad workers, and equipment operators. The studies showed these workers were more likely than workers who were not exposed to diesel emissions to develop lung cancer. These studies provide strong evidence that long-

term occupational exposure to diesel exhaust increases the risk of lung cancer. Other researchers and scientific organizations, including the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), have calculated similar cancer risks from diesel exhaust as those calculated by OEHHA. Exposure to diesel exhaust can have immediate health effects. Diesel exhaust can irritate the eyes, nose, throat and lungs, and it can cause coughs, headaches, lightheadedness, and nausea. People with allergies, existing cardiovascular disease, the elderly, and children considered sensitive populations for DPM exposure. Exposure to diesel exhaust also causes inflammation in the lungs, which may aggravate chronic respiratory symptoms and increase the frequency or intensity of asthma attacks.

Respirable Crystalline Silica—Respirable crystalline silica (RCS) refers to crystalline silicon dioxide with aerodynamic diameter less than four (4) microns (i.e., 0.0004 cm). Crystalline silica or quartz is ubiquitous in nature. Most dust generated by construction and mining activities including blasting produces dust particles larger than 4 microns. These particles are too large to reach the alveoli of the lungs which are the target organ. Thus, RCS constitutes a tiny fraction of the particulate matter dust from these sources and does not represent a significant health risk to neighbors of these types of projects. In order to result in toxic effects, the silica needs to be crystalline, smaller than 4 microns, inhaled, and not exhaled. Inhalation of RCS initially causes respiratory irritation and an inflammatory reaction in the lungs. Silicosis results from chronic exposure; it is characterized by the presence of histologically unique silicotic nodules and by fibrotic scarring of the lung. Lung diseases other than cancer associated with silica exposure include silicosis, tuberculosis/silicotuberculosis, chronic bronchitis, small airways disease, and emphysema. Ambient air exposures do not cause concern but levels to which workers (e.g., miners, sandblasters) may be exposed have been shown to cause cancer.

Air Quality Monitoring

The ambient air quality of Ventura County is monitored by a network of five stations, located in El Rio, Ojai, Piru, Simi Valley and Thousand Oaks. The nearest air quality monitoring stations are the El Rio station (at Rio Mesa High School), located approximately 9.5 miles northwest of the Project site, and the Thousand Oaks station (at Thousand Oaks High School) located approximately 7.3 miles east-northeast of the Project site. Table 3.4-2, "Summary of Ambient Air Pollutant Data Collected at the El Rio and Thousand Oaks Monitoring Stations," lists the monitored maximum concentrations and number of exceedances of air quality standards at these stations for the years 2016 through 2018. The El Rio station monitors ozone, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and nitrogen dioxide. The Thousand Oaks station monitors ozone and $PM_{2.5}$. As shown in Table 3.4-2, nitrogen dioxide concentrations monitored at the El Rio station did not exceed the State or Federal standards. Both State and Federal ozone standards were exceeded on very rare occasions at the El Rio and Thousand Oaks stations. Concentrations of PM_{10} monitored at the El Rio station exceeded the State 24-hour standard in 2016 through 2018 and the Federal 24-hour standard in 2017 and 2018. Concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ monitored at the El Rio station exceeded the Federal 24-hour standard in 2017 and 2018. Concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ monitored at the Thousand Oaks station exceeded the Federal 24-hour standard in 2018.

Table 3.4-2. Summary of Ambient Air Pollutant Data Collected at the El Rio and Thousand Oaks Monitoring Stations

Parameter	Standard	Year		
		2016	*2017*	*2018*
EL RIO MONITORING STATION				
Ozone – Parts Per Million (ppm)				
Maximum 1-hour concentration monitored		0.084	0.084	0.072
Number of days exceeding CAAQS	0.09	0	0	0
Maximum 8-hour concentration monitored		0.071	0.071	0.062
Number of days exceeding CAAQS and NAAQS	0.070	1	1	0
PM_{10} – Micrograms Per Cubic Meter ($\mu g/m^3$)				
Maximum 24-hour average sample (California sampler)		101.6	286.0	208.4
Number of samples exceeding CAAQS	50	14	29	21
Number of samples exceeding NAAQS	150	0	1	2
$PM_{2.5}$ – Micrograms Per Cubic Meter ($\mu g/m^3$)				
Maximum 24-hour average sample		22.7	81.3	41.2
Number of samples exceeding NAAQS	35	0	4	1
Nitrogen Dioxide – Parts Per Billion (ppb)				
Maximum 1-hour concentration monitored		33	36	49
Number of days exceeding CAAQS	180	0	0	0
Number of days exceeding NAAQS	100	0	0	0
THOUSAND OAKS MONITORING STATION				
Ozone – Parts Per Million (ppm)				
Maximum 1-hour concentration monitored		0.080	0.090	0.080
Number of days exceeding CAAQS	0.09	0	0	0
Maximum 8-hour concentration monitored		0.076	0.073	0.073
Number of days exceeding CAAQS and NAAQS	0.070	1	6	1
$PM_{2.5}$ – Micrograms Per Cubic Meter ($\mu g/m^3$)				
Maximum 24-hour average sample		35.2	32.0	41.5
Number of samples exceeding NAAQS	35	0	0	1

3.4.1.3 Sensitive Receptors

Some land uses are considered more sensitive to air pollution than others due to population groups and/or activities involved. Sensitive population groups include children, the elderly, the acutely ill and the chronically ill, especially those with cardio-respiratory diseases. Residential areas are also considered to be sensitive to air pollution because residents (including children and the elderly) tend to be at home for extended periods of time, resulting in sustained exposure to any pollutants present.

Recreational land uses may be considered moderately sensitive to air pollution. Although exposure periods are generally short, exercise places a high demand on respiratory functions, which can be impaired by air pollution. In addition, noticeable air pollution can detract from the enjoyment of recreation. Industrial and commercial areas are considered the least sensitive to air pollution. Exposure periods are relatively short and intermittent, as the majority of the workers tend to stay indoors most of the time. In addition, the working population is generally the healthiest segment of the public.

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," the Project site is located in a semi-rural area of unincorporated Ventura County. The nearest residential land uses are located to the east-southeast of the Project site within the City of Thousand Oaks. The residences nearest to the expanded mining boundary

are located at the ends of Via Sandra and Via Pisa in the Dos Vientos Ranch community, just over approximately 0.15 miles from the nearest portion of the existing and proposed CUP boundary. Two residences are also located approximately 0.5 and 0.75 miles to the northwest of the existing and proposed CUP boundary in unincorporated Ventura County, near the southern end of Pancho Road and just south of the intersection of Howard Road and Pancho Road, respectively. Residential areas are also located in the City of Camarillo approximately 0.9 miles to the northeast of the Project site on the north side of Conejo Mountain and approximately 1.5 miles to the northwest of the Project site on the north side of Pleasant Valley Road. The nearest school is Sycamore Canyon School, located approximately one mile southeast of the Project site. The Camarillo Springs Golf Course is located approximately 0.6 miles to the north of the Project site. An athletic field with baseball diamonds is located at the Dos Vientos Community Park approximately 0.5 miles to the southeast of the Project site. The Concentra Urgent Care facility is located approximately 1.8 miles to the north of the Project site. Open space areas with trails accessible to the public are located west and north of the site.

3.4.1.4 Planning for Attainment of Ambient Air Quality Standards

Federal

The Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) was enacted in 1963 to improve air quality and protect citizens' health and welfare, and required implementation of the NAAQS. The NAAQS are revised and changed when scientific evidence indicates a need. The CAA also requires each state to prepare an air quality control plan referred to as a State Implementation Plan (SIP). The CAA Amendments of 1990 added requirements for states with non-attainment areas to revise their SIPs to incorporate additional control measures to reduce air pollution. The SIP is modified periodically to reflect the latest emissions inventories, planning documents, and rules and regulations of the air basins as reported by their jurisdictional agencies. The USEPA has been charged with implementing Federal air quality programs, which includes the review and approval of all SIPs to determine conformation to the mandates of the CAA and its amendments, and to determine whether implementation of the SIPs will achieve air quality goals. If the USEPA determines that a SIP is inadequate, a Federal Implementation Plan that imposes additional control measures may be prepared for the non-attainment area. Failure to submit an approvable SIP or to implement the plan within the mandated time frame may result in application of sanctions to transportation funding and stationary air pollution sources within the air basin.

Pursuant to the CAA, state and local agencies are responsible for planning for attainment and maintenance of the NAAQS. The USEPA classifies air basins (i.e., distinct geographic regions) as either "attainment" or "non-attainment" for each criteria pollutant, based on whether the NAAQS have been achieved. Some air basins have not received sufficient analysis for certain criteria air pollutants and are designated as "unclassified" for those pollutants.

The VCAPCD and the CARB are the responsible agencies for providing attainment plans and for demonstrating attainment of NAAQS standards within Ventura County. The VCAPCD updated the Ventura County Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP) in 2016 to build on past AQMPs including a strategy to attain the 2008 Federal 8-hour ozone standard, an attainment demonstration and reasonable further progress demonstration for the Federal 8-hour ozone standard. The 2016 AQMP includes control strategies to be implemented both locally (Ventura County) and statewide, to reduce air pollutant emissions as needed to attain the Federal 8-hour ozone standard. The 2016 AQMP includes four new stationary source control measures to be adopted as rules to facilitate attainment of the Federal 8-hour ozone standard.

Effective August 3, 2018, USEPA designated the SCCAB as a non-attainment area with a classification of "serious" for the 2015 Federal 8-hour ozone standard (0.070 ppm). Through implementation of the 2016 AQMP, the VCAPCD anticipates attainment of the 2015 Federal 8-hour ozone standard by 2025 (VCAPCD, 2017).

State

The California Clean Air Act (CCAA), signed into law in 1988, requires all areas in California to achieve and maintain attainment with the CAAQS by the earliest possible date. The CCAA, enforced by CARB, requires that each area exceeding the CAAQS develop a plan aimed at achieving those standards. The California Health and Safety Code, Section 40914, requires air districts to design a plan that achieves an annual reduction in district-wide emissions of 5 percent or more, averaged every consecutive 3-year period. To satisfy this requirement, the local air districts are required to develop and implement air pollution reduction measures, which are described in their clean air plans, incorporated into the SIP, and outline strategies for achieving the CAAQS for criteria pollutants for which the region is classified as non-attainment.

In 2004, CARB adopted an Airborne Toxic Control Measure (ATCM) to limit heavy-duty diesel motor vehicle idling in order to reduce public exposure to diesel PM and other TACs (Title 13 California Code of Regulations [CCR], Section 2485). The measure applies to diesel-fueled commercial vehicles with gross vehicle weight ratings greater than 10,000 pounds that are licensed to operate on highways, regardless of where they are registered. This measure does not allow diesel-fueled commercial vehicles to idle for more than five minutes at any given time.

In 2008 CARB approved the Truck and Bus regulation to reduce NO_x, PM10, and PM2.5 emissions from existing diesel vehicles operating in California (13 CCR, Section 2025). The requirements were amended to apply to nearly all diesel-fueled trucks and buses with a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) greater than 14,000 pounds. For the largest trucks in the fleet, those with a GVWR greater than 26,000 pounds, there are two methods to comply with the requirements. The first method is for the fleet owner to retrofit or replace engines, starting with the oldest engine model year, to meet 2010 engine standards, or better. Implementation of the retrofit method is phased over 8 years, starting in 2015 and fully implemented by 2023, meaning that all trucks operating in the State subject to this method would meet or exceed the 2010 engine emission standards for NO_x and PM by 2023. The second method, if chosen, required fleet owners, starting in 2012, to retrofit a portion of their fleet with diesel particulate filters achieving at least 85 percent removal efficiency, with installation of diesel particulate filters for their entire fleet by January 1, 2016. However, diesel particulate filters do not typically lower NO_x emissions. Thus, fleet owners choosing the second method must still comply with the 2010 engine emission standards for their trucks and buses.

CARB also promulgated emission standards for off-road diesel construction equipment of greater than 25 horsepower such as bulldozers, loaders, backhoes and forklifts, as well as many other self-propelled off-road diesel vehicles. The regulation adopted by the CARB on July 26, 2007, aims to reduce emissions by the installation of diesel soot filters and encouraging the retirement, replacement, or repower of older, dirtier engines with newer emission controlled models (13 CCR, Section 2449). Implementation is staggered based on fleet size (which is the total of all off-road horsepower under common ownership or control), with the largest fleets to begin compliance in 2014, medium fleets in 2017, and small fleets in 2019. Each fleet must demonstrate compliance through one of two methods. The first method option is to calculate and maintain fleet average emissions targets, which encourages the retirement or repowering of older equipment and rewards the introduction of newer cleaner units into the fleet. The second method option is to meet the Best Available Control Technology (BACT) requirements by turning over or installing Verified Diesel Emission

Control Strategies (VDECS) on a certain percentage of its total fleet horsepower. The compliance schedule requires that BACT turn overs or retrofits (VDECS installation) be fully implemented by 2023 in all equipment for large and medium fleets and by 2028 for small fleets.

Local Authority

The VCAPCD is the local agency that has primary responsibility for regulating stationary sources of air pollution located within its jurisdictional boundaries. To this end, the VCAPCD implements air quality programs required by State and federal mandates, develops and enforces local rules and regulations based on air pollution laws, and educates businesses and residents about their role in protecting air quality. In 1991, the VCAPCD adopted an AQMP to attain the California ozone standards. The CCAA mandates that every three years areas update their clean air plans to attain the State ozone standard. The most recent triennial update, "Draft 2018 Ventura County Triennial Assessment and Plan Update 2015 – 2017" (VCAPCD, 2018) indicates Ventura County is making significant progress towards attaining the California 1-hour ozone standard. The "every feasible measure" analysis conducted for the update identified four existing VCAPCD rules for enhancement and one new control measure to comply with Assembly Bill (AB) 617 Best Available Retrofit Control Technology (BARCT) requirements to facilitate progress toward attainment. The four existing VCAPCD rules identified for enhancement to comply with AB 617 include Rule 71.3 (Transfer of ROC Liquids), Rule 74.10 (Components at Crude Oil and Natural Gas Production and Processing Facilities), Rule 74.15 (Boilers, Steam Generators and Process Heaters), and Rule 74.23 (Stationary Gas Turbines). The proposed new Rule 74.32 (Composting and Organic Material Conversion Operations) would reduce ROC emissions from composting and organic material conversion operations. These rules are not applicable to the Project.

The VCAPCD is responsible for managing and permitting existing, new, and modified sources of air emissions within the County. VCAPCD rules and regulations with potential applicability to ongoing and proposed operations include:

- **Rule 10 (Permits Required):** This rule requires an Authority to Construct and Permit to Operate before the construction or operation, respectively, of non-exempt emission sources.
- **Rule 23 (Exemptions from Permit):** This rule lists operations, equipment, and other emission sources that are exempt from the requirements of Rule 10, but must comply with emission standards and prohibitions.
- **Rule 26 (New Source Review):** This rule outlines the requirements for new, replacement, modified or relocated emissions units in Ventura County.
- **Rule 50 (Opacity):** This rule provides limits on visible emissions from non-exempt sources.
- **Rule 51 (Nuisance):** This rules states that a person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property.
- **Rule 55 (Fugitive Dust):** This rule provides limits on fugitive dust emissions and control measures to minimize fugitive dust.

3.4.1.5 Greenhouse Gases and Global Climate Change

Climate change, often referred to as "global warming," is a global environmental issue that refers to any significant change in measures of climate, including temperature, precipitation, or wind. Climate change

refers to variations from baseline conditions that extend for a period (decades or longer) of time and is a result of both natural factors, such as volcanic eruptions, and anthropogenic, or man-made, factors including changes in land-use and burning of fossil fuels. Anthropogenic activities such as deforestation and fossil fuel combustion emit heat-trapping GHGs, defined as any gas that absorbs infrared radiation within the atmosphere.

According to data from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the Earth's average surface temperature has increased by about 1.2 to 1.4 ºF in the last century. Average temperatures have risen across the contiguous 48 states since 1901, with an increased rate of warming over the past 30 years. Eight of the top 10 warmest years on record have occurred since 1998. Average global temperatures show a similar trend, and all of the top 10 warmest years on record worldwide have occurred since 1998. Within the United States, temperatures in parts of the north, the west, and Alaska have increased the most. GHG emissions are a global issue, as climate change is not a localized phenomenon. California regulates six GHGs emissions, which are described below.

Carbon Dioxide (CO_2)—Natural sources include decomposition of dead organic matter; respiration of bacteria, plants, animals, and fungus; evaporation from oceans; and volcanic degassing; anthropogenic sources of CO_2 include burning fuels such as coal, oil, natural gas, and wood.

Methane (CH_4)—Natural sources include wetlands, permafrost, oceans and wildfires; anthropogenic sources include fossil fuel production, rice cultivation, biomass burning, animal husbandry (fermentation during manure management), and landfills.

Nitrous Oxide (N_2O)—Natural sources include microbial processes in soil and water, including those reactions which occur in nitrogen-rich fertilizers; anthropogenic sources include industrial processes, fuel combustion, aerosol spray propellant, and use of racing fuels.

Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)—There are no natural sources of CFCs; they are synthesized for use as refrigerants, aerosol propellants, and cleaning solvents.

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs)—There are no natural sources of HFCs; they are synthesized for use in refrigeration, air conditioning, foam blowing, aerosols, and fire extinguishing.

Sulfur Hexafluoride (SF_6)—There are no natural sources of SF_6; they are synthesized for use as an electrical insulator in high voltage equipment that transmits and distributes electricity. SF_6 has a long lifespan and high global warming potency.

The primary GHGs that would be emitted by the Project and which are currently emitted from existing operations at the Project site are CO_2, CH_4 and N_2O. (As with existing operations, the Project is not expected to have any associated use or release of HFCs, CFCs, or SF_6; thus this evaluation considers CO_2, CH_4, and N_2O). The atmospheric heat absorption potential of a GHG is referred to as the "global warming potential" (GWP). Each GHG has a GWP value based on its atmospheric heat-absorption properties for a given volume of the GHG relative to CO_2. This is commonly referred to as CO_2 equivalent (CO_2E). The GWP of the three GHGs associated with the Project are defined by CARB: CO_2 – GWP of 1, CH_4 – GWP of 25, and N_2O – GWP of 298.

International Authority

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) is the leading body for the assessment of climate change. The IPCC is a scientific body that reviews and assesses the most recent scientific, technical, and socio-economic information produced worldwide relevant to the understanding of climate change. The

scientific evidence brought up by the first IPCC Assessment Report of 1990 unveiled the importance of climate change as a topic deserving international political attention to tackle its consequences; it therefore played a decisive role in leading to the creation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the key international treaty to reduce global warming and cope with the consequences of climate change.

On March 21, 1994, the United States joined a number of countries around the world in signing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Under the Convention, governments gather and share information on GHG emissions, national policies, and best practices; launch national strategies for addressing GHG emissions and adapting to expected impacts, including the provision of financial and technological support to developing countries; and cooperate in preparing for adaptation to the impacts of climate change.

The Kyoto Protocol is an international treaty which extends the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and commits governments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, based on the premise that (a) climate change exists and (b) human-made CO_2 emissions have exacerbated changes to the global climate. The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Kyoto, Japan, on December 11, 1997 and entered into force on February 16, 2005. There are currently 192 signatory parties to the Protocol including the United States; however, the United States has not ratified the Protocol and is not bound by its commitments.

At the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris, a global agreement was initiated, which represented a consensus of the representatives of the 196 parties attending it. On April 22, 2016 (Earth Day), 174 countries signed the Paris Agreement in New York, and began adopting it within their own legal systems (through ratification, acceptance, approval, or accession). As of May 2019, 195 United Nations Climate Change Conference members have signed the agreement, 186 of which have ratified, accepted, approved, or acceded to the agreement.

Federal Authority

On September 22, 2009, the USEPA released its final GHG Reporting Rule (Reporting Rule), in response to the fiscal year 2008 Consolidated Appropriations Act (H.R. 2764; Public Law 110-161) that required the USEPA to develop "… mandatory reporting of GHGs above appropriate thresholds in all sectors of the economy." The Reporting Rule applies to most entities that emit 25,000 metric tons (MT) CO_2E or more per year. On September 30, 2011, facility owners were required to submit an annual GHG emissions report with detailed calculations of facility GHG emissions. The Reporting Rule mandates recordkeeping and administrative requirements for the USEPA to verify annual GHG emissions reports but does not regulate GHG as a pollutant.

The CAA defines the USEPA's responsibilities for protecting and improving the nation's air quality and the stratospheric ozone layer. On May 13, 2010, USEPA set greenhouse gas emissions thresholds to define when permits under the New Source Review Prevention of Significant Deterioration and Title V Operating Permit programs are required for new and existing industrial facilities. This final rule "tailors" the requirements of these CAA permitting programs to limit covered facilities to the nation's largest greenhouse gas emitters: power plants, refineries, and cement production facilities.

GHG emissions and fuel efficiency standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks have been jointly developed by the USEPA and the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). For vocational vehicles, which consist of a variety of work vehicles including dump trucks, the Phase 1 Heavy-Duty Vehicle Greenhouse Gas Regulation started with model year 2014 and the standard requires up to a

10 percent reduction in CO_2 emissions by model year 2017 over the 2010 baseline. The Phase 2 standards start in model year 2021 and require the phase-in of a 12 to 24 percent reduction in CO_2 emission reduction from vocational vehicles by model year 2027 over the 2017 baseline.

State Authority

Senate Bill 97, enacted in 2007, amends the CEQA statute to clearly establish that greenhouse gas emissions and the effects of GHG emissions are appropriate for CEQA analysis. It directs the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop guidelines "for the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions or the effects of greenhouse gas emissions as required by this division." (Pub. Res. Code § 21083.05(a)).

In December of 2009, the California Natural Resources Agency adopted amendments to the CEQA Guidelines (Title 14, Cal. Code of Regulations, §15000 et seq.) to comply with the mandate set forth in Public Resources Code §21083.05. These revisions became effective March 18, 2010. According to GHG amendments to the CEQA Guidelines, each public agency that is a CEQA lead agency needs to develop its own approach to performing a climate change analysis for projects that generate GHG emissions. A consistent approach should be applied for the analysis of all such projects, and the analysis must be based on best available information.

The CARB developed regulations for mandatory reporting of greenhouse gas emissions in 2007, which incorporated by reference certain requirements promulgated by the USEPA in its Final Rule on Mandatory Reporting of Greenhouse Gases (Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 98). These regulations were revised in 2010, 2012, 2013, and 2014, with the current regulations becoming effective on January 1, 2015.

In efforts to reduce and mitigate climate change impacts, state and local governments are implementing policies and initiatives aimed at reducing GHG emissions. California, one of the largest state contributors to the national GHG emission inventory, has adopted significant reduction targets and strategies. The primary legislation affecting GHG emissions in California is the California Global Warming Solutions Act (Assembly Bill [AB] 32). AB 32 focuses on reducing GHG emissions in California, and requires the CARB to adopt rules and regulations that would achieve GHG emissions equivalent to statewide levels in 1990 by 2020. CARB has determined that California had reduced statewide GHG emissions to below 1990 level in calendar year 2016. The most recent statewide GHG emissions inventory for calendar year 2017 also shows statewide GHG emissions below 1990 levels. In addition to AB 32, two State-level Executive Orders have been enacted by the Governor (Executive Order S-3-05, signed June 1, 2005, and Executive Order S-01-07, signed January 18, 2007) that mandate reductions in GHG emissions.

In 2016, the California State Legislature adopted Senate Bill (SB) 32 and its companion bill AB 197, and both were signed by Governor Brown to update AB 32 and include an emissions reductions goal for the year 2030. SB 32 and AB 197 establishes a new climate pollution reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030, and includes provisions to ensure the benefits of State climate policies reach into disadvantaged communities.

In June 2008, CARB developed a Draft Scoping Plan for Climate Change, pursuant to AB-32. The Scoping Plan was approved at the Board hearing on December 12, 2008. The Scoping Plan proposes a comprehensive set of actions designed to reduce overall carbon emissions in California, improve our environment, reduce our dependence on oil, diversify our energy sources, save energy, and enhance public health while creating new jobs and enhancing the growth in California's economy. Key elements of the Scoping Plan for reducing California's greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 include:

- Expansion and strengthening of existing energy efficiency programs and building and appliance standards.
- Expansion of the Renewables Portfolio Standard to 33 percent.
- Development of a California cap-and-trade program that links with other Western Climate Initiative Partner programs to create a regional market system.
- Implementation of existing State laws and policies, including California's clean car standards, goods movement measures, and the Low Carbon Fuel Standard.
- Targeted fees to fund the State's long-term commitment to AB 32 administration.

The Climate Change Scoping Plan was updated in May 2014, and confirms that California is on target for meeting the 2020 GHG emissions reduction goal. The Climate Change Scoping Plan was updated again in November 2017 and adopted by CARB in December 2017 to incorporate the State's 2030 GHG reduction goal of 40 percent below 1990 level emissions. The "California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan" (CARB, 2017a) builds on the existing Cap-and-Trade regulation and the Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) and includes improved vehicle, truck and freight movement emissions standards, increased renewable energy standards, and strategies to reduce methane emissions from agricultural and other wastes by using it to meet California's energy needs. The 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan also comprehensively addresses GHG emissions from natural and working lands of California, including the agriculture and forestry sectors. According to the 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan, the majority of the reductions would result from the continuation of the Cap-and-Trade regulation. Additional reductions are achieved from electricity sector standards (i.e., utility providers to supply at least 50 percent renewable electricity by 2030), doubling the energy efficiency savings at end uses, additional reductions from the LCFS, implementing the short-lived GHG strategy (e.g., hydrofluorocarbons), and implementing the mobile source strategy and sustainable freight action plan (CARB, 2017a).

The State has adopted regulations to increase the proportion of electricity from renewable sources. In November 2008, Governor Schwarzenegger signed Executive Order S-14-08 (Office of the Governor, 2008), which expands the State's Renewables Portfolio Standard to 33 percent renewable power by 2020. On April 12, 2011, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB X1-2 to increase California's Renewables Portfolio Standard to 33 percent by 2020. SB 350 (Chapter 547, Statues of 2015) further increased the Renewables Portfolio Standard to 50 percent by 2030. The legislation also included interim targets of 40 percent by 2024 and 45 percent by 2027. On September 10, 2018, Governor Jerry Brown signed SB 100, which further increased California's Renewables Portfolio Standard and requires retail sellers and local publicly owned electric utilities to procure eligible renewable electricity for 44 percent of retail sales by December 31, 2024, 52 percent by December 31, 2027, and 60 percent by December 31, 2030, and that CARB should plan for 100 percent eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources by December 31, 2045.

As discussed above, Federal GHG emissions and fuel efficiency standards for medium- and heavy-duty trucks have been jointly developed by the USEPA and the NHTSA. CARB has stated that California is aligning with the federal Phase 2 standards in structure, timing, and stringency, but with some minor California differences (CARB, 2017b).

Local Authority

The Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020) serves as the County's Climate Action Plan (CAP) by including both a GHG Strategy and Climate Adaptation Strategy that are integrated throughout the 2040 General Plan. The GHG Strategy identifies policies and implementation programs that establish

GHG emissions reduction targets and GHG reduction measures, consistent with state guidance and applicable GHG protocols.

3.4.1.6 Odors and Nuisance

Certain types of facilities and land uses have the potential to generate odorous emissions. Odorous emissions are subject to nuisance regulations because they can be pervasive enough to annoy a considerable number of persons. The VCAPCD regulates nuisance under Rule 51, which prohibits the discharge of air contaminants that would cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause injury or damage to business or property.

The Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (Ventura County VCAPCD, 2003) indicates environmental documents should include an assessment of the potential for a proposed project to cause a public nuisance (as defined by VCAPCD Rule 51) by subjecting surrounding land uses to objectionable odors. Potential odor impacts on residential areas, schools, day care centers, playgrounds, retirement homes, hospitals and job sites warrant the closest examination (Ventura County VCAPCD, 2003).

3.4.1.7 Existing Fugitive Dust Reduction Measures

Existing mining and processing operations at the site are subject to VCAPCD Permit to Operate (PTO) Number 00489 which provides requirements for various processing and operations at the site. The PTO includes conditions limiting annual and hourly particulate matter emissions, restricting use of CARB Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP) registration equipment, limiting annual production, defining moisture content and opacity limitations, and specifying recordkeeping and reporting requirements. Implementation of BACT to control and minimize fugitive dust emissions is required pursuant to the PTO. The following fugitive dust control-related measures are included in the PTO as conditions 8 through 17 (Fugitive Dust Control-related Measures):

8. *The moisture content of the material in all locations of the Rock Screening and Crushing Plant shall be maintained at greater than or equal to 3 percent by weight. This condition is applied as BACT (Best Available Control Technology).*

   In order to demonstrate compliance with this condition, the permittee shall determine the moisture content on a quarterly basis at four representative locations throughout the plant; including: a) at the exit of the Simplicity Rip Rap Sorter b) prior to the screen, and c) at the exit of the screen. The most recent version of ASTM Test Method C566 shall be used. The samples shall be obtained during normal plant operation and shall be obtained, transported, and analyzed in a manner consistent with current ASTM practices. The moisture content measurement results shall be. Made available to District personnel upon request.
9. *For the Rock Screening and Crushing plant, the permittee shall maintain the moisture content of the material by installing and maintaining water spray application equipment at the Linkbelt screen and other transfer points as necessary. This condition is applied as BACT (Best Available Control Technology).*
10. *The moisture content of the material processed in the Extec, Model S-5, and Powerscreen, Model 800-PS, portable mobile screening plants shall be maintained at greater than or equal to 3 percent by weight. This condition is applied as BACT (Best Available Control Technology). In order to demonstrate compliance with this condition, the permittee shall determine the moisture content on a quarterly basis at the exit of each plant. The most recent version of ASTM Method C566 shall be used. The samples shall be obtained during normal plant operation and shall be obtained, transported, and analyzed in a manner consistent with current ASTM practices. The moisture content measurement results shall be made available to District personnel upon request.*

11. *Fugitive emissions shall not exceed 10% opacity at all material transfer points, except for truck dumping into the Simplicity Rip Rap Sorter. This condition is applied as BACT (Best Available Control Technology).*
12. *The Rock Screening and Crushing Plant and the Simplicity Rip Rap Sorter were installed after August 31, 1983 and before April 22, 2008; therefore, they are subject to the requirements of 40 CFR Part 60, Subpart 000, as described below.*
13. *Equipment installed after August 31, 1983 but before April 22, 2008 is subject to Part 60, Chapter 1, Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart 000, Standards of Performance for Non-Metallic Mineral Processing Plants. This includes, but is not limited to the following:*
    a) *No stack emissions shall be discharged into the atmosphere from any transfer point on belt conveyors or other affected facility which contain particulate matter in excess of 0.05 g/dscm (0.02 gr/dscf) and exhibit greater than 7% opacity unless the emissions are discharged to a wet scrubber.*
    b) *No fugitive emissions greater than 10% opacity shall be discharged into the atmosphere from any transfer point on belt conveyors or from any other affected facility, except for truck dumping into a screening operation, feed hopper, or crusher.*
    c) *No fugitive emissions greater than 15% opacity shall be discharged into the atmosphere from any crusher without a capture system.*
    d) *No stack emissions greater than 7% opacity shall be discharged into the atmosphere from any baghouse controlling only an individual, enclosed storage bin.*
    e) *No stack emissions shall be discharged into the atmosphere from multiple storage bins with combined emissions which contain particulate matter in excess of 0.05 g/dscm (0.02 gr/dscf) and exhibit greater than 7% opacity.*

    The above opacity standards shall apply at all times except during periods of startup, shutdown, malfunction, and as otherwise provided. Emissions that are exempt from the above opacity standards shall not exceed 20% opacity for more than 3 minutes in any one hour in order to comply with APCD Rule 50, "Opacity."
14. *The Extec, Model S-5, and Powerscreen, Model 800-PS, portable mobile screening plants were put into use at this stationary source after April 22, 2008 and are subject to the "after April 22, 2008" requirements of 40 CFR Part 60, Subpart 000 as described below.*
15. *Equipment installed after April 22, 2008 is subject to Part 60, Chapter 1, Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Subpart 000, Standards of Performance for Non-Metallic Mineral Processing Plants. This includes, but is not limited to the following:*
    a) *No stack emissions shall be discharged into the atmosphere from any transfer point on belt conveyors or other affected facility which contain particulate matter in excess of 0.032 g/dscm (0.014 gr/dscf).*
    b) *No fugitive emissions greater than 7% opacity shall be discharged into the atmosphere from any transfer point on belt conveyors or from any other affected facility, except for truck dumping into a screening operation, feed hopper, or crusher.*
    c) *No fugitive emissions greater than 12% opacity shall be discharged into the atmosphere from any crusher without a capture system.*
    d) *No stack emissions greater than 7% opacity shall be discharged into the atmosphere from any baghouse controlling only an individual, enclosed storage bin.*
    e) *No stack emissions shall be discharged into the atmosphere from multiple storage bins with combined emissions which contain particulate matter in excess of 0.032 g/dscm (0.014 gr/dscf).*
    f) *On a monthly basis, the permittee shall inspect all water spray equipment to ensure that it is operating properly. Any necessary repairs shall be initiated within 24 hours and completed as*

expediently as possible. The permittee shall record the date of each inspection and any corrective action taken in a logbook.

The above opacity standards shall apply at all times except during periods of startup, shutdown, malfunction, and as otherwise provided. Emissions that are exempt from the above opacity standards shall not exceed 20% opacity for more than 3 minutes in any one hour in order to comply with APCD Rule 50, "Opacity."

16. *Road and work areas shall be watered and/or treated to control fugitive dust. This condition has been applied pursuant to Rule 50, "Opacity."*
17. *This stationary source shall comply with all applicable requirements of Rule 55, "Fugitive Dust."*

3.4.1.8 Existing Emissions Sources and Baseline Emissions

Existing site emissions are generated by on-site activities including aggregates mining and aggregates processing. Sources of existing site emissions include off-road equipment and vehicle engines, on-road vehicle engines, and fugitive dust emissions from drilling, quarrying, storage piles and aggregates handling, and vehicle travel on paved and unpaved surfaces. The following is a list of the emission sources of engine-powered equipment used at the existing quarry operation for aggregates mining and aggregates processing and activities that generate fugitive dust:

- Drill Rig
- Excavator (John Deere 870 Ex)
- Dozer (John Deere 1050 K)
- Loader (John Deere 844 K)
- Off-Road Haul Truck (John Deere 410 E)
- On-Road Haul Trucks
- Worker Vehicles
- Screening and Crushing Plant Engine (Extect S5, PowerScreen 800-PS)
- Recycling Plant Equipment Engines
- Fugitive dust from drilling, quarrying, off-road and on-road haul travel, plant aggregate processing, processing area material handling (i.e., material drop and storage), and aggregate crushing

As discussed above, non-exempt air pollutant emission sources associated existing mining and processing operations at the site are subject to VCAPCD PTO Number 00489 which provides requirements for various processing and operations at the site. The PTO authorizes the use of the Rock Screening and Crushing Plant (powered by grid electricity when operated), Simplicity Rip Rap Sorter (powered by grid electricity when operated), Extec Portable Mobile Screening Plant (powered by diesel engine), and Powerscreen Portable Mobile Screening Plant (powered by diesel engine).

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 requires that a lead agency should assess the impact of a proposed project by evaluating "changes in the existing physical conditions in the affected area as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published, or where no notice of preparation is published, at the time environmental analysis is commenced."

The CEQA "baseline" for this analysis considers activities and emissions associated with the existing operation. (Section 3.1.3 provides additional discussion of the CEQA baseline and the approach to baseline used in this EIR.) Although maximum hourly emissions are not used as the CEQA baseline for this EIR

analysis, the maximum hourly emissions are relevant to the analysis, as discussed further below, so a discussion of these emissions is relevant here. Maximum hourly emissions were estimated by Sespe (2019b) by analyzing engine information and production records provided by the Operator based on the existing maximum operational level of 500 tons of production per hour. According to facility inspection records for the past approximately five years (2014 through 2019) maintained by the VCAPCD, the permitted Extec Portable Mobile Screening Plant operated during this period while the Powerscreen Portable Mobile Screening Plan was not used during this period. The maximum operational level of 500 tons of production per hour is based on the permitted limit for the Extec. Maximum hourly emissions for on-site operations at 500 tons per maximum hour are provided in Table 3.4-3, "Maximum Hour Air Pollutant Emissions." A detailed discussion of the modeling methodology and calculations for estimating hourly emissions are provided in the "Air Quality, Health Risk, and Climate Change Impact Assessment," (Sespe, 2019b) and in the "Supplemental Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Evaluation and Health Risk Screening for the Pacific Rock Quarry Conditional Use Permit Modification Application," (ESA, 2020), which are included as Appendices B-1 and B-2 of this EIR.

Table 3.4-3. Maximum Hour Air Pollutant Emissions

Source	Maximum Hour Emissions (pounds/hour)					
	ROC	***CO***	***NO_X***	***PM_{10}***	***$PM_{2.5}$***	***SO_X***
Quarrying Fugitive Emissions[1]	--	--	--	5.25	1.53	--
Quarrying Engine Emissions[1]	0.24	1.55	3.42	0.12	0.11	0.005
Off-Road Haul - Mine to Processing Area (Fugitive)[1]	--	--	--	8.39	1.78	--
Off-Road Haul - Mine to Processing Area (Engine)[1]	0.27	1.41	3.25	0.13	0.12	0.004
Plant/Aggregate Processing[1]	0.17	1.07	1.77	0.07	0.07	0.003
Processing Area Drop/Storage[1]	--	--	--	3.09	0.90	--
Loadout Processing Area Drop/Storage[1]	--	--	--	0.39	0.11	--
On-road On-site Haul Engine Emissions[1]	0.01	0.02	0.06	<0.01	<0.01	<0.001
On-road On-site Haul Fugitive Emissions[1]	--	--	--	1.60	0.34	--
Drilling Fugitive Dust[2]	--	--	--	0.04	0.01	--
Drill Rig[2]	0.54	8.90	2.78	0.27	0.25	0.015
On-road Off-site Haul Truck Travel[2]	0.12	0.57	2.08	0.18	0.09	0.003
On-road Off-site Worker Travel[2]	0.04	0.35	0.04	0.08	0.02	<0.001
Total[3]	**1.39**	**13.87**	**13.41**	**19.61**	**5.32**	**0.03**

Sources: Sespe, 2019b Table 6 and Appendix D; ESA, 2020.

1. Sespe, 2019b.

2. ESA, 2020.

3. Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding in the modeling calculations.

According to Operator reporting submitted to the VCAPCD, during the period August 1, 2015 through July 31, 2016, total annual production during the period was 37,345 tons. Records indicate that the aggregate was produced over a total of 90 days during this period, resulting in a daily average of approximately 415 tons per day. Although on-site production does not necessarily directly equate to off-site transport, an assumed correlation between on-site production and off-site transport is considered

sufficient for the purposes of this analysis. Based on an assumed typical average haul truck load capacity of 25 tons, the transport of 37,345 tons of aggregate requires 1,494 haul truck loads, resulting in an average of 16.6 daily haul truck loads from the site. To determine the number of trips, the number of haul truck loads is multiplied by two to account for the trip associated with the unloaded truck traveling to the site. Thus, approximately 415 tons per day of production and 33 daily one-way haul truck trips are assumed under baseline conditions for a typical day of operations. Baseline daily emissions for on-site operations at 415 tons per day are provided in Table 3.4-4, "Baseline Daily Air Pollutant Emissions."

Table 3.4-4. Baseline Daily Air Pollutant Emissions

Source	Baseline Daily Emissions (pounds/day)					
	ROC	***CO***	***NO_X***	***PM_{10}***	***$PM_{2.5}$***	***SO_X***
Quarrying Fugitive Emissions[1]	--	--	--	4.36	1.27	--
Quarrying Engine Emissions[1]	0.20	1.29	2.84	0.10	0.09	<0.01
Off-Road Haul - Mine to Processing Area (Fugitive)[1]	--	--	--	6.96	1.48	--
Off-Road Haul - Mine to Processing Area (Engine)[1]	0.23	1.17	2.70	0.10	0.10	<0.01
Plant/Aggregate Processing[1]	0.14	0.89	1.47	0.06	0.06	<0.01
Processing Area Drop/Storage[1]	--	--	--	2.56	0.75	--
Loadout Processing Area Drop/Storage[1]	--	--	--	0.32	0.09	--
On-road On-site Haul Engine Emissions[1]	0.05	0.13	0.47	0.01	0.01	<0.01
On-road On-site Haul Fugitive Emissions[1]	--	--	--	12.77	2.71	--
Drilling Fugitive Dust[2]	--	--	--	0.03	<0.01	--
Drill Rig[2]	0.45	7.38	2.31	0.22	0.20	<0.01
On-road Off-site Haul Truck Travel[2]	0.99	4.55	16.65	1.48	0.75	0.02
On-road Off-site Worker Travel[2]	0.08	0.71	0.08	0.16	0.04	<0.01
Total[3]	**2.14**	**16.12**	**26.52**	**29.13**	**7.55**	**0.03**

Sources: Sespe, 2019b; ESA, 2020.

1. Sespe, 2019b. Derived by multiplying baseline maximum hour production of 500 tons by a factor of 0.83 to reflect baseline daily production of 415 tons.

2. ESA, 2020.

3. Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding in the modeling calculations.

As discussed in Chapter 2, Project Description, the baseline annual production is 20,900 tons, which is the 10-year average annual production as reported by the Operator during the period 2008-2017. (See EIR Section 3.1.3 for additional discussion of CEQA baseline considerations, including CEQA Guidelines Section 15125(a)(1), which discusses lead agency discretion in selecting an appropriate baseline when existing conditions change or fluctuate over time.) An average annual production rate was needed for establishing baseline and proposed emissions due to the characteristics of mining operations and daily and season fluctuations in processing which is influenced by local supply and demand for aggregate resources. For this evaluation, baseline annual emissions are derived by multiplying the baseline maximum hour production of 500 tons by a factor of 41.8 to reflect baseline annual production of 20,900 tons (500 tons per hour x 41.8 hours per year = 20,900 tons per year), multiplying the baseline maximum hour emissions by the 41.8 factor and converting from pounds to tons (pounds / 2,000 = tons). Baseline annual emissions for

on-site operations at 20,900 tons per year are provided in Table 3.4-5, "Baseline Annual Air Pollutant Emissions."

Table 3.4-5. Baseline Annual Air Pollutant Emissions

Source	Baseline Annual Emissions (tons/year)					
	ROC	***CO***	***NO_X***	***PM_{10}***	***$PM_{2.5}$***	***SO_X***
Quarrying Fugitive Emissions[1]	--	--	--	0.110	0.032	--
Quarrying Engine Emissions[1]	0.005	0.032	0.071	0.003	0.002	<0.001
Off-Road Haul - Mine to Processing Area (Fugitive)[1]	--	--	--	0.175	0.037	--
Off-Road Haul - Mine to Processing Area (Engine)[1]	0.006	0.030	0.068	0.003	0.002	<0.001
Plant/Aggregate Processing[1]	0.003	0.022	0.037	0.002	0.001	<0.001
Processing Area Drop/Storage[1]	--	--	--	0.065	0.019	--
Loadout Processing Area Drop/Storage[1]	--	--	--	0.008	0.002	--
On-road On-site Haul Engine Emissions[1]	<0.001	0.003	0.012	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001
On-road On-site Haul Fugitive Emissions[1]	--	--	--	0.322	0.068	--
Drilling Fugitive Dust[2]	--	--	--	0.001	<0.001	--
Drill Rig[2]	0.007	0.108	0.034	0.003	0.003	<0.001
On-road Off-site Haul Truck Travel[2]	0.025	0.115	0.419	0.037	0.019	0.001
On-road Off-site Worker Travel[2]	0.003	0.032	0.004	0.007	0.002	<0.001
Total[3]	**0.050**	**0.342**	**0.645**	**0.736**	**0.187**	**0.001**

Sources: Sespe, 2019b; ESA, 2020.

1. Sespe, 2019b. Derived by multiplying the baseline maximum hour production of 500 tons by a factor of 41.8 to reflect baseline annual production of 20,900 tons (500 tons per hour x 41.8 hours per year = 20,900 tons per year), multiplying the baseline maximum hour emissions by the 41.8 factor and converting from pounds to tons (pounds / 2,000 = tons).
2. ESA, 2020.
3. Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding in the modeling calculations.

The existing operation generates GHG emissions from on-site mining and processing activities. Sources of existing site GHG emissions include on-site emissions including off-road equipment and vehicle engines, on-road vehicle engines. Although not produced at the site, the production of electricity used at the site for electric-powered equipment also generates GHG emissions. The emissions are derived based on the estimated GHG emissions by Sespe (2019b) and dividing the emissions by the permitted annual production of 468,000 and multiplying by the baseline annual production of 20,900 tons, and adjusted based on supplemental analysis as described in the "Supplemental Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Evaluation and Health Risk Screening for the Pacific Rock Quarry Conditional Use Permit Modification Application," (ESA, 2020). Baseline annual GHG emissions for operations at 20,900 tons per year are provided in Table 3.4-6, "Baseline Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions."

Table 3.4-6. Baseline Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Source	Baseline Annual Emissions (metric tons/year) CO_2E
Electricity Use[1]	52.9
Equipment and Vehicle Engine Emissions[1,2]	102.4
Total[3]	**155.3**

Sources: Sespe, 2019b Table 21 and Appendix D; ESA, 2020.

1. Sespe, 2019b. Derived by dividing the estimated GHG emissions in Sespe, 2019b Table 21 by the permitted annual production of 468,000 and multiplying by the baseline annual production of 20,900 tons.

2. ESA, 2020.

3. Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding in the modeling calculations.

3.4.2 Impact Analysis

3.4.2.1 Significance Thresholds

Significance thresholds for air quality impacts are derived from the State CEQA Guidelines, the Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (VCAPCD, 2003), and rules and regulations of the VCAPCD.

Criteria Pollutants

Short-term/Construction and Site Reclamation Emissions. Short-term air quality impacts generally occur during project construction and site reclamation. CEQA requires a discussion of short-term impacts of a project in the environmental document. However, the County generally considers temporary construction emissions insignificant and quantitative thresholds for construction emissions have not been established. However, the VCAPCD recommends fugitive dust and ROC and NOx emission reduction measures provided in the Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines be implemented.

Long-term/Operational Emissions Thresholds. Long-term air quality impacts occur during project operation and include emissions from any equipment or process used in the project (e.g., residential water heaters, engines, boilers, and operations using paints or solvents) and motor vehicle emissions associated with the project. These emissions must be summed in order to determine the significance of the project's long-term impact on air quality.

A significant adverse air quality impact may occur when a project triggers any one of the following in excess of baseline conditions:

- Result in daily emissions exceeding 25 pounds of ROC or NOx.
- Cause a violation or make a substantial contribution to a violation of an ambient air quality standard.
- Directly or indirectly cause the existing population to exceed the population forecasts in the most recently adopted AQMP.
- Be inconsistent with the AQMP and emit greater than 2 pounds per day ROC or NOx.

With respect to fugitive dust, VCAPCD Rule 51 (Nuisance) states that a person shall not discharge from any source whatsoever such quantities of air contaminants or other material which cause injury, detriment, nuisance or annoyance to any considerable number of persons or to the public, or which endanger the comfort, repose, health or safety of any such persons or the public, or which cause, or have a natural tendency to cause, injury or damage to business or property.

Toxic Air Contaminants

Projects that may emit TACs should be assessed to determine whether those TAC emissions may adversely impact nearby populations. If a project will emit TACs, an appropriate TAC health risk assessment (HRA) may be conducted to assess the potential of those TAC emissions to adversely impact nearby populations.

A significant adverse air quality impact may occur when a project triggers any one of the following in excess of baseline conditions:

- Result in a maximum incremental increase in cancer risk greater than or equal to 10 in 1 million.
- Result in a maximum incremental increase in non-cancer Hazard Index greater than or equal to 1.0.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020) which serves as the County's Climate Action Plan (CAP) identifies policies and implementation programs that establish GHG emissions reduction targets and GHG reduction measures, consistent with state guidance and applicable GHG protocols. The Project's consistency with applicable General Plan GHG policies is evaluated in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning," of this EIR. The General Plan will result in revisions to the County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG), but those revisions and quantified GHG thresholds of significance have not been established through that process. On January 30, 2018, the VCAPCD issued a memorandum recommending a GHG threshold of significance of 10,000 $MTCO_2E$ per year for stationary source projects located within Ventura County (VCAPCD, 2018b). The 10,000 $MTCO_2E$ per year value is used in this EIR as the quantified GHG emission threshold to determine the significance of the contribution of the Project GHG emissions above baseline emissions to global climate change.

Odors

According to the "Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines," odors generally do not pose a health risk; however, they can be a nuisance if they interfere with the use of neighboring land uses. The first step in an odor analysis is to determine whether a proposed project could generate odorous emissions in such quantities as to be a nuisance to nearby land uses based on information submitted by the project applicant and considering the lead agency's and the VCAPCD's knowledge and experience with the same or similar facility type. For projects that may generate odorous emissions, the next step is to determine if the potential source of the odors is closer than the screening distances (either 1 mile or 2 miles depending on the odorous land use) in Table 6-3 of the Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines. For an existing source of odorous emissions, an odor impact may occur if more than one confirmed odor complaint per year with the VCAPCD, averaged over a three-year period, or three unconfirmed odor complaints per year with the VCAPCD, averaged over a three-year period have occurred (VCAPCD, 2003). Consistent with the VCAPCD guidelines, the potential for an odor impact is evaluated based on the Project's potential to generate odorous emissions to nearby land uses in such quantities as to be a nuisance and the frequency of past odor complaints associated with the existing mining facility at the Project site.

Air Quality Management Plan

The Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines (VCAPCD, 2003) establish procedures to determine project consistency with the AQMP for projects conforming to applicable general plans and having emissions of two pounds or greater per day of ROC or two pounds or greater per day of NO_x. The first step is identifying if a project site is located in a growth or non-growth area using Figure 4-1 in the Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines. Based on Figure 4-1 of the Ventura County Air

Quality Assessment Guidelines, the Project site is located in the Camarillo non-growth area. For non-growth areas, projects should determine conformance with the applicable General Plan, and then determine if the estimated population of the aggregated non-growth areas for the current year exceeds its next year's population target. If the current estimated population of the aggregated non-growth areas exceeds its next year's population target, the project should be found to be inconsistent with the AQMP. Inconsistency with the AQMP is considered a significant cumulative adverse air quality impact.

3.4.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts

Proposed Changes to Existing Mining Operations

Project-related air pollutant and GHG emissions sources would include mobile sources (heavy equipment, on-road vehicles). Air pollutant emissions would also include fugitive dust associated with mining activities, processing operations, and haul truck loading.

The current permit (CUP 3817-3) authorizes the production and export of a maximum of 86,000 tons per year of mineral materials (e.g., rip-rap and aggregate materials). However, for the purposes of this EIR, the baseline for annual production is the 10-year average annual production as reported by the Operator during the period 2008-2017, which is 20,900 tons per year. As discussed above, the existing operation generates an average of 16.6 truckloads of aggregate deliveries per normal (i.e., non-emergency) operating day, which is an average of approximately 33 one-way truck trips per normal operating day, and an average shipment of 415 tons of aggregate material per normal operating day.

Existing hours of operations are between 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Saturday, which includes mining excavation and processing, equipment fueling and maintenance, and aggregate hauling. The Project would expand the hours of operations and number of operating days per week. Operational hours for equipment maintenance and aggregate hauling would be expanded to 5:30 AM to 10:00 PM. The Project would also allow for 24-hour operations to accommodate special circumstances up to 60 days per year. Weekly operations would be expanded to include Sundays for equipment maintenance and aggregate hauling. The operating schedule for mining excavation and processing would not change.

The Project would permit annual production and sales of up to 468,000 tons per year, resulting in an average daily production of approximately 1,500 tons/day (468,000 tons per year / 312 days) during a year of maximum production. No change in the maximum number of permitted daily truckloads is proposed, and the operation would continue to be limited to a maximum of 120 one-way truck trips (60 truckloads) during any one day. However, for the purposes of this evaluation, baseline production and truckloads are considered to be less than the permitted maximum. As discussed, the 10-year average aggregate production of 20,900 tons per year is considered the baseline annual production, and 415 tons per day is considered the baseline daily production for estimating baseline daily emissions, as shown previously in Table 3.4-4.

Under the Project, no changes to the mining and blasting methods, processing methods, or mining and processing equipment are proposed. Under the Project, no changes to truck loading or hauling practices, routing, or the permitted number of annual, daily, or peak-hour maximum haul truck trips are proposed. The Project would modify (extend) the hours of operation, which would allow for truck loading and hauling during additional hours of the day and days of the week, but loading and hauling practices would remain unchanged.

The Applicant proposes the use of a portable recycling plant to crush and process recycled concrete and asphalt at the Project site. The recycle plant would utilize conveyors, a crusher, and screen to recycle

materials. Up to 30,000 cubic yards per year of concrete and asphalt debris would be received, crushed, and sold as base material. Material received and shipped would be considered in the operation's 60 loads per day truck trip limit.

Clean fill material would be imported to the site and processed for sale as an aggregate material or used in preparing pad areas of the site for the end use of agriculture. Fill material would consist of soil, mud, rocks, and minor amounts organic material, but would not contain construction debris. Up to 100,000 cubic yards of imported fill could be received at the site annually. Imported fill received at and shipped from the site would be considered in the operation's 60 loads per day truck trip limit.

While no change in the maximum daily *permitted* mining and processing rate is proposed, for the purposes of this evaluation, the Project's daily emissions are assessed relative to the baseline daily production and truckloads for criteria air pollutant emissions and relative to the baseline annual production and truckloads for GHG emissions. As discussed in Section 3.4.1.8, above, daily and annual baseline emissions used for the emissions analysis in this EIR are estimated based on historical average production rates derived from available production records. Thus, the baseline is not based on, and is lower than, existing permitted production levels. Furthermore, because the approach uses the average historical production rate, the baseline is lower than the maximum daily and annual production rates than have been historically achieved by the existing operation.

The Project would expand the mining area boundary to the east, north, and south, which would result in emissions, including emissions of TACs, that would be generated closer to the residential community located to the east-southeast of the Project site in the City of Thousand Oaks. The Project site would be approximately 0.15 miles from the nearest residential uses. According to the "Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines," "land uses that will be located within one-quarter mile of an existing source (or sources) of TACs should be evaluated for the potential to be impacted by those TACs" (VCAPCD, 2003). Therefore, a health risk assessment (HRA) was conducted to evaluate potential health risk impacts to sensitive receptors from the Project's expansion of the mining area boundary to the east, north, and south. For the purposes of the HRA, a conservative analysis was prepared that does not subtract out the health risks from the baseline annual, daily, or hourly production or truckloads and considers the Project's health risk impacts to be all net new impacts. These assumptions result in higher (i.e., more conservative) estimated health risk impacts associated with the Project.

Impact AQ-1: Project activities would generate air pollutant emissions that could affect regional air quality. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The Project would generate air pollutant emissions associated with mining activities, aggregate processing, haul truck loading and unloading, recycle asphalt and concrete processing, receipt and placement of fill, and on- and off-site hauling and worker vehicle trips. These activities would generate air pollutant emissions, including exhaust emissions and fugitive dust. The Project would expand the hours of operations and number of operating days per week. The Project would not change the maximum permitted daily production and truckloads; however, maximum daily production and truckloads under the Project would exceed those of the baseline conditions used for the purposes of this evaluation. Additionally, the Project would generate emissions associated with proposed activities that do not currently occur at the site, including operation of the proposed concrete and asphalt recycle plant and receipt and placement of imported fill for reclamation. For this analysis, Project emissions assume a daily production of 1,500 tons/day (468,000 tons per year / 312 days per year), 120 one-way truck trips (60 truckloads) for a maximum shipment of 1,500 tons of aggregate per operating day (60

trucks per day × 25 tons per truck = 1,500 tons per day of shipment), and concurrent recycle plant operation and fill material import and backfill activities. Daily emissions from the various Project emissions sources are presented in Table 3.4-7, "Project Daily Air Pollutant Emissions." Table 3.4-7 also provides a comparison of the Project's total daily emissions to the baseline daily emissions (see Table 3.4-4 for detail regarding baseline emissions). The sections that follow discuss the results of the emissions comparison in terms of the Project's impact associated with the analyzed criteria pollutants.

Table 3.4-7. Project Daily Air Pollutant Emissions

Source	Project Daily Emissions (pounds/day)					
	ROC	***CO***	***NO_X***	***PM10***	***PM2.5***	***SO_X***
Quarrying Fugitive Emissions	--	--	--	15.75	4.59	--
Quarrying Engine Emissions	0.46	3.38	4.93	0.18	0.17	0.01
Off-Road Haul - Mine to Processing Area (Fugitive)	--	--	--	25.17	5.34	--
Off-Road Haul - Mine to Processing Area (Engine)	0.45	2.68	3.91	0.14	0.13	0.01
Plant/Aggregate Processing	0.50	3.21	5.32	0.22	0.20	0.01
Processing Area Drop/Storage	--	--	--	9.27	2.70	--
Loadout Processing Area Drop/Storage	--	--	--	1.17	0.33	--
On-road On-site Haul Engine Emissions	0.04	0.53	0.86	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
On-road On-site Haul Fugitive Emissions	--	--	--	45.15	9.78	--
Drilling Fugitive Dust	--	--	--	0.32	0.04	--
Drill Rig	0.26	2.08	3.04	0.09	0.08	0.01
On-road Off-site Haul Truck Travel	0.77	6.28	24.24	3.79	1.20	0.08
On-road Off-site Worker Travel	0.14	1.27	0.11	0.65	0.17	<0.01
Recycle Plant Fugitive Dust	--	--	--	2.38	0.31	--
Recycle Plant Equipment	1.41	9.27	14.16	0.55	0.51	0.03
Reclamation Fill Handling	--	--	--	0.33	0.05	--
Project Total	**4.03**	**28.70**	**56.57**	**106.16**	**25.60**	**0.15**
Baseline Total (from Table 3.4-4)	**2.14**	**16.12**	**26.52**	**29.13**	**7.55**	**0.03**
Net Total[1]	**1.89**	**12.58**	**30.05**	**77.03**	**18.05**	**0.12**
Significance Threshold	**25**	-	**25**	-	-	-
Exceeds Significance Threshold?	**No**	-	**Yes**	-	-	-

Source: ESA, 2020.

1. Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding in the modeling calculations.

Fugitive Dust Emissions

The Project would generate fugitive dust emissions, primarily from mining activities, which include quarrying, off-road and on-road haul travel, plant aggregate processing, and processing area material handling (i.e., material drop and storage). The VCAPCD has not established numerical significance thresholds for fugitive dust emissions (i.e., PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$). The potential for significant impacts from fugitive dust emissions is based on compliance with VCAPCD rules associated with fugitive dust control measure implementation. As discussed previously, the existing facility has developed and

implemented BACT to control and minimize fugitive dust emissions as per the requirements in the VCAPCD Permit to Operate Number 00489. The permit includes numerous fugitive dust control-related measures identified as conditions 8 through 17. Operations under the Project would be required to continue to comply with required fugitive dust control-related measures as specified in the existing permit as well as any additional fugitive dust control measures imposed in the future through the VCAPCD permitting requirements. Operations under the Project would also be required to comply with VCAPCD Rule 55, which includes controlling vehicle track-out. As per Rule 55, track-out shall be removed at the conclusion of each workday or evening shift subject to the same condition regarding PM_{10} efficient street sweepers and the use of blowers to remove track-out is expressly prohibited. Rule 55 also prohibits visible dust beyond the property line such that the dust remains visible beyond the midpoint (width) of a public street or road adjacent to the property line of the emission source or beyond 50 feet from the property line if there is not an adjacent public street or road. Compliance with VCAPCD permit conditions and fugitive dust Rule 55 would ensure that nuisance impacts related to fugitive dust would be less than significant.

CO and SO_X Emissions

As shown in Table 3.4-7, Project's net daily emissions increase over baseline daily emissions would be up to 12.58 pounds of CO and 0.12 pounds of SO_X. The SCCAB is designated as attainment/unclassifiable for the federal CO and SO_2 NAAQS and attainment for the state CO and SO_2 CAAQS. As the region is in attainment or attainment/unclassifiable for these pollutants, the VCAPCD has not established numeric daily mass emissions thresholds of significance for CO or SO_X and, as such, CO and SO_X emission impacts would be less than significant. The neighboring South Coast Air Quality Management District, which is similarly designated as attainment/maintenance for the federal CO NAAQS, attainment/unclassifiable for the federal SO_2 NAAQS and attainment for the state CO and SO_2 CAAQS, has established numeric daily mass emissions thresholds of significance for CO and SO_X of 550 and 150 pounds per day, respectively. As shown in Table 3.4-7, the Project's net daily emissions increase over baseline daily emissions would not exceed these values. While these values are used by the South Coast Air Quality Management District as significance thresholds for projects within its jurisdiction, the similar attainment status with respect to CO and SO_X renders this information as evidence that supports the Project's less-than significant impact finding.[1]

ROC and NO_X Emissions

As shown in Table 3.4-7, Project's net daily emissions increase over baseline daily emissions would be up to 1.89 pounds of ROC and 30.05 pounds of NO_X. Project emissions would not exceed the significance threshold of 25 pounds per day of ROC but would have the potential to exceed the significance threshold of 25 pounds per day of NO_X. Therefore, the impact associated with Project NO_X emissions as a criteria pollutant and ozone precursor is considered significant for the purposes of this

[1] Some localized areas, such as traffic-congested intersections, can have elevated levels of CO concentrations, often referred to as "CO hotspots". CO hotspots are defined as locations where ambient CO concentrations exceed the State Ambient Air Quality Standards (20 ppm for 1-hr standard, 9.0 ppm for 8-hr standard). The Federal Ambient Air Quality Standard for CO is 35 ppm for the 1-hr standard and 9 ppm for the 8-hr standard. In Ventura County, ambient air monitoring for CO stopped in 2004, with the approval of USEPA Region 9, because CO background concentrations at various locations within the County were much lower than the State Ambient Air Quality Standard. Therefore, no CO hotspots are expected to occur in the County, including in areas where the Project is located and areas within the County where Project-related haul truck trips would occur, and additional CO modeling analysis is not warranted. In addition, with over 80 percent of the CO in urban areas emitted by motor vehicles, and with stricter, cleaner emission standards to the mobile fleet, CO ambient concentrations are reasonably anticipated to remain at or lower than the most recent CO monitoring data available for Ventura County.

analysis. As such, additional discussion of effects of NO_X emissions and consideration of mitigation options is discussed here.

As discussed previously, NO_X is a generic term that includes nitric oxide (NO) and nitrogen dioxide (NO_2). NO_X is a primary component of the photochemical smog reaction in the production of ozone and can contribute to other pollution problems, including a high concentration of fine particulate matter, poor visibility, and acid deposition (i.e., acid rain). NO_X decreases lung function and may reduce resistance to infection. Acute exposure to NO_2 may cause pulmonary edema, pneumonitis, and bronchitis. Once inhaled, NO_2 reaches the lower respiratory tract, affecting mainly the bronchioles and the adjacent alveolar spaces, where it may produce pulmonary edema within hours.

As discussed, ozone (O_3) is formed by photochemical reactions between NO_X and ROC, rather than being directly emitted. Ozone is a strong irritating gas that can chemically burn and cause narrowing of airways, forcing the lungs and heart to work harder to provide oxygen to the body. As a powerful oxidant, ozone is capable of destroying organic matter – including human lung and airway tissue, essentially burning through cell walls. Ozone damages cells in the lungs, making the passages inflamed and swollen. Ozone also causes shortness of breath, nasal congestion, coughing, eye irritation, sore throat, headache, chest discomfort, breathing pain, throat dryness, wheezing, fatigue, and nausea. It can damage alveoli, the individual air sacs in the lungs where oxygen and carbon dioxide are exchanged. Ozone has been associated with a decrease in resistance to infections. People most likely to be affected by ozone include the elderly, the young, and athletes. Ozone may pose its worst health threat to people who already suffer from respiratory diseases such as asthma, emphysema, and chronic bronchitis. (VCAPCD, 2003)

In addition to human health issues, ozone can also have adverse effects on agricultural crops and natural vegetation. Smog and particulates interfere with photosynthesis and can injure leaves, reduce growth, reduce crop quality, reduce reproductive capacity, increase weed and pest infestation, and/or kill the plant, thereby reducing crop yield. Damage often occurs before visible symptoms of injury are noticed. Areas in California where plant damage from air pollution has been reported coincides with the areas of highest population density. These areas include a triangular zone extending from the Mexican border to approximately 80 miles north and eastward of Ventura. Some of the greatest plant damage from air pollution is seen on fruit and vegetable crops, and flowers. Coastal sage scrub and chaparral also are sensitive to air pollutants. The most important effect is a reduced ability to cope with drought, disease, and insects. Air pollution may put these plants at a reproductive disadvantage by causing them to produce fewer seeds. These conditions can lead to changes in succession, resulting in a totally different plant community occupying a site. (VCAPCD, 2003)

The Project's potential exceedance of the NO_X significance threshold of 25 pounds per day of NO_X is based on analysis of average daily production of 1,500 tons per day during a year of maximum production. Since emission rates correlate with production rates, should the Project operate at a less intense annual capacity, the average daily emissions would also be lower.

Since NOx emissions are predicted to exceed the significance threshold at the analyzed production and hauling rates of 1,500 tons per day, mitigation for Project NO_x emissions must be considered. As discussed above, CARB has promulgated emission standards for off-road diesel construction equipment of greater than 25 horsepower such as bulldozers, loaders, backhoes and forklifts, as well as many other self-propelled off-road diesel vehicles. The regulation adopted by the CARB on July 26, 2007, aims to reduce emissions by requiring installation of diesel soot filters in certain equipment and

encouraging the retirement, replacement, or repower of older, dirtier engines with newer emission controlled models (13 CCR, Section 2449). The regulation compliance schedule requires that Best Available Control Technology (BACT) turnovers or Verified Diesel Emission Control Strategies (VDECS) be fully implemented by 2023 in all equipment for large and medium fleets and by 2028 for small fleets. These requirements, as implemented in equipment operated at the Project site, would reduce Project emissions. However, since implementation of the regulation is phased between 2023 and 2028, the requirements may not address Project emissions during the phase-in period.

Mitigation Measure MM AQ-1 provides a set of NOx emissions reduction measures, each of which measures would individually reduce the Project net daily NOx emissions to below the significance threshold of 25 pounds per day. Options A, B, and C provide operational restrictions that would avoid a combination of activities that would exceed the NOx emissions thresholds. Since emissions reductions will also be achieved through compliance with CARB off-road emissions standards to be phased in through 2028 as discussed above, the production limitations of mitigation measures MM AQ-1 Options A through C would be removed once the Permittee provides evidence to the County that onsite off-road diesel equipment has been replaced or retrofitted in compliance with CARB standards sufficient to reduce net Project onsite NOx emissions to less than 25 pounds per day over baseline emissions. The operational restriction requirements of MM AQ-1 Options A, B, and C are summarized below.

MM AQ-1 Option A would limit the daily processing of material recycled at the recycle facility to a maximum of 900 tons per day on any day during which drilling activities are occurring, which would result in net daily NOx emissions of up to approximately 24.4 pounds in a day and would be below the 25 pounds per day significance threshold. The operational limitations of this option would remain in effect until such time as the Permittee provides evidence that onsite off-road diesel equipment is replaced or retrofitted in compliance with CARB standards sufficient to reduce net Project onsite NOx emissions under maximum operations of all permitted onsite activities to below 25 pounds per day over baseline emissions.

MM AQ-1 Option B would limit the daily quarrying activities to a maximum of 900 tons per day on any day during which the recycle facility is in operation, which would result in net NOx emissions of up to approximately 24.4 pounds in a day and would be below the 25 pounds per day significance threshold. The operational limitations of this option would remain in effect until such time as the Permittee provides evidence that onsite off-road diesel equipment is replaced or retrofitted in compliance with CARB standards sufficient to reduce net Project onsite NOx emissions under maximum operations of all permitted onsite activities to below 25 pounds per day over baseline emissions.

MM AQ-1 Option C would limit the daily number of haul truck loads to 46 loads per day on any day during which recycle processing or quarrying activities at a daily production rate of 900 tons per day or more occur, which would result in net NOx emissions of up to approximately 24.2 pounds per day and would be below the 25 pounds per day significance threshold. The operational limitations of this option would remain in effect until such time as the Permittee provides evidence that onsite off-road diesel equipment is replaced or retrofitted in compliance with CARB standards sufficient to reduce net Project onsite NOx emissions under maximum operations of all permitted onsite activities to below 25 pounds per day over baseline emissions.

Implementation of MM AQ-1 Options A, B, or C on any given day would reduce maximum net NOx emissions to below the threshold of significance and would therefore reduce Impact AQ-1 to less than significant.

MM AQ-1 Option D would require the Operator to retrofit or replace a sufficient combination of off-road diesel-powered equipment rated at 50 horse-power (hp) or greater operated at the Project site to meet the CARB and USEPA Tier 4 off-road or equivalent emissions standards. For such equipment with a horsepower (hp) rating between 175 and 750 hp, the Tier 4 Final off-road emissions standard for NOx is 0.3 grams per brake-hp-hour (see: CARB, Non-road Diesel Engine Certification Tier Chart, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/es/resources/documents/non-road-diesel-engine-certification-tier-chart)
Based on the equipment inventory consisting of an excavator (estimated 500 hp), dozer (estimated 350 hp), loader (estimated 400 hp), and off-road trucks (estimated 450 hp), retrofitting or replacing the dozer, or the loader, or the off-road haul trucks is sufficient to reduce the net Project daily NOx emissions to below 25 pounds per day over baseline emissions and would therefore reduce Impact AQ-1 to less than significant.

Either of the mitigation Options A, B, C, or D discussed above would be sufficient to reduce net NOx emissions associated with the Project to below the significance threshold and would reduce Impact AQ-1 to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact AQ-1:

MM AQ-1: *The Permittee shall implement one of the following mitigation strategies to reduce NOx emissions associated with implementation of the Project sufficient to reduce net Project NOx emissions to less than 25 pounds per day over the 26.52 pounds per day baseline NOx emissions.*

> ***MM AQ-1 Option A:*** *Until such time as the Permittee provides evidence to the County that net Project onsite NOx emissions associated maximum daily operation of all permitted activities would be below 25 pounds per day over baseline emissions, the Permittee shall limit the tons of material processed by the recycle plant when drilling, quarrying, and hauling activities are occurring simultaneously in the same day. Under this strategy, the Permittee shall limit the material processed at the Recycling Plant to 900 tons in a day. Drilling, quarrying operations, and truck hauling may occur simultaneously in the same day. The Permittee shall submit documentation to the County on an annual basis documenting daily recycle plant operation and drilling, quarrying, and hauling activities which verifies that daily operational limits where sufficient to meet the requirements of this measure.*
>
> ***MM AQ-1 Option B:*** *Until such time as the Permittee provides evidence to the County that net Project onsite NOx emissions associated maximum daily operation of all permitted activities would be below 25 pounds per day over baseline emissions, the Permittee shall limit the tons of material quarried when drilling, recycling processes, and hauling activities are occurring simultaneously in the same day. Under this strategy, the Permittee shall limit the material quarried to 900 tons in a day. Drilling, recycling processes, and truck hauling may occur simultaneously in the same day. The Permittee shall submit documentation to the County on an annual basis documenting daily recycle plant operation and drilling, quarrying, and hauling activities which verifies that daily operational limits where sufficient to meet the requirements of this measure.*
>
> ***MM AQ-1 Option C:*** *Until such time as the Permittee provides evidence to the County that net Project onsite NOx emissions associated maximum daily operation of all permitted activities would*

be below 25 pounds per day over baseline emissions, the Permittee shall limit the number of on-road haul truck trips when drilling activities, quarrying operations, and recycling processes are occurring simultaneously in the same day. Under this strategy, the Permittee shall limit the number of daily haul truck trips to 46 truckloads in a day. Drilling activities, quarrying operations, and recycling processes may occur simultaneously in the same day. The Permittee shall submit documentation to the County on an annual basis documenting daily recycle plant operation and drilling, quarrying, and hauling activities which verifies that daily operational limits where sufficient to meet the requirements of this measure.

MM AQ-1 Option D: *The Permittee shall retrofit or replace a sufficient number of off-road diesel-powered equipment rated at 50 horse-power (hp) or greater operated at the Project site to meet the CARB and USEPA Tier 4 Final off-road or equivalent emissions standards. For such equipment with a horsepower (hp) rating between 175 and 750 hp, the Tier 4 Final off-road emissions standard for NOx is 0.3 grams per brake-hp-hour (see: CARB, Non-road Diesel Engine Certification Tier Chart, https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/es/resources/documents/non-road-diesel-engine-certification-tier-chart). The Permittee shall submit documentation to the County on an annual basis identifying all diesel-powered equipment used at the site and shall provide evidence that the equipment meets the requirements of this measure. The Permittee's documentation shall include a copy of each unit's certified tier specification or model year specification and CARB or VCAPCD operating permit (if applicable) shall be available upon request at the time of mobilization of each applicable unit of equipment and shall be provided with each annual submittal.*

Impact AQ-2: Project emissions of toxic air contaminants would increase cancer and non-cancer health risk. (Less than Significant)

The Project would continue to generate emissions associated with ongoing mining operations similar to baseline conditions as discussed at Impact AQ-1. However, the proposed expansion of the mine area would result in periods of mining nearer to existing residences and other potentially sensitive receptors. The Project would expand the mining area boundary to the east, north, and south, at a distance of approximately 0.15 miles from the nearest residential uses. Mining activities and diesel-fueled equipment would operate throughout the allowed mining area and would occur at this closest distance for short-term durations. Mining activities and diesel-fueled equipment would be used at greater distances from the nearest residential uses most of the time. The HRA evaluates impacts of emissions that would be associated with Project operations assuming maximum annual production and without deducting baseline emissions, and therefore provides a conservative assessment of potential health risk.

OEHHA is responsible for developing and revising guidelines for performing health risk assessments (HRAs) under the State's the Air Toxics Hot Spots Program Risk Assessment (AB 2588) regulation. In March 2015, OEHHA adopted revised guidelines that update the previous guidance by incorporating advances in risk assessment with consideration of infants and children using Age Sensitivity Factors (ASF). The HRA was performed in accordance with the revised OEHHA "Air Toxics Hot Spots Program Guidance Manual for Preparation of Health Risk Assessments" (OEHHA, 2015). The analysis incorporates the Project's estimated TAC emissions and dispersion modeling using the USEPA AERMOD model with meteorological data from the Camarillo Airport (Meteorological Station ID 23136). A detailed discussion of the modeling methodology and calculations are provided in the "Air Quality, Health Risk, and Climate Change Impact Assessment," (Sespe, 2019b), which is included as Appendix B-1 of this EIR. Sespe (2019b) concluded that the Project would not result in a significant

increase in health risk. The Sespe (2019b) HRA was adjusted to account for additional Project emission sources based on supplemental analysis provided in the "Supplemental Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Evaluation and Health Risk Screening for the Pacific Rock Quarry Conditional Use Permit Modification Application," (ESA, 2020) in Appendix B-2. The supplemental analysis resulted in increasing the predicted health risk by approximately 7.5 percent as compared to the Sespe conclusion. Table 3.4-8, "Summary of maximum Project Health Risk Impacts," provides the adjusted HRA results and conclusion that the Project would not exceed the significance thresholds at the nearest sensitive uses.

Table 3.4-8. Summary of Maximum Project Health Risk Impacts

Model Receptor No. – Type – Location	Excess Cancer Cases per One Million People Exposed	Maximum Chronic Hazard Index	Maximum Acute Hazard Index
136 – MEIR (Cancer, Chronic) – North of Project	1.08	0.026	0.011
109 – MEIR (Acute) – East of Project	0.35	0.006	0.011
103 – MEIW (Cancer, Chronic, Acute) – Funeral Home	1.51	0.280	0.023
194 – PMI – Project Boundary (UTM 316339, 3783949)	N/A	N/A	0.085
Significance Threshold	**10**	**1.0**	**1.0**
Exceeds Significance Threshold?	**No**	**No**	**No**

Source: ESA, 2020.

Other sensitive uses, such as Sycamore Canyon School, the golf course to the north, an athletic field with baseball diamonds to the southeast, and the Concentra Urgent Care facility to the north, are located at much further distances from the Project site and would experience much lower levels of Project-related TAC emission concentrations and lower health risk as compared to the nearest residential uses for which the HRA was performed. Based on the analysis, the Project would not result in the emissions of TACs that would cause health risk to exceed the significance thresholds and the Project health risk impact would be less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact AQ-2:

No mitigation required.

Impact AQ-3: Project greenhouse gas emissions contribution to global climate change. (Less than Significant)

The Project would continue to generate GHG emissions associated with ongoing mining operations. Sources of existing site GHG emissions include off-road equipment and vehicle engines, on-road vehicle engines, and from electricity use for electric-powered equipment. The Applicant requests an increase in permitted annual production and sales from the existing 86,000 tons per year to 468,000 tons per year. However, in order to provide a conservative assessment, this analysis compares the Project's GHG emissions from 468,000 tons per year to the 10-year average aggregate production of 20,900 tons per year, which is considered the baseline annual production as discussed previously. A summary of the Project's GHG emissions is provided in Table 3.4-9, "Summary of Project Greenhouse Gas Emissions." Modeling calculations are provided in the "Air Quality, Health Risk, and Climate Change Impact Assessment," (Sespe, 2019b), which is included as Appendix B-1 of this EIR, and in the supplemental analysis provided in the "Supplemental Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Evaluation and Health Risk Screening for the Pacific Rock Quarry Conditional Use Permit Modification

Application," (ESA, 2020), which is included as Appendix B-2 of this EIR. As shown, the Project would not exceed the significance threshold. Therefore, GHG emission impacts would be less than significant.

Table 3.4-9. Summary of Project Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Source	Maximum Annual Emissions (metric tons/year) *CO2E*
Electricity Use	1,184.5
Equipment and Vehicle Engine Emissions	2,282.1
Project Total	**3,466.6**
Baseline Total (from Table 3.4-6)	**155.3**
Net Total[1]	**3,311.3**
Significance Threshold	**10,000**
Exceeds Significance Threshold?	**No**

Source: ESA, 2020.
[1] Totals may not add up exactly due to rounding in the modeling calculations.

The Project would also not conflict with applicable plans, policies, and regulations for reducing emissions of GHGs. The USEPA and NHTSA heavy-duty vehicle GHG emissions standards, as adopted by CARB, would ensure that as the Project's heavy-duty vehicles are turned over (i.e., as old model year trucks are retired and replaced with new model year trucks), future GHG emissions from these heavy-duty vehicles would decline in future years, consistent with the State's goal of reducing future year GHG emissions to meet the year 2030 target and beyond. In addition, transportation fuels used by the Project's vehicles and equipment would be in conformance with the LCFS as fuel suppliers would be required to provide fuels meeting the applicable low carbon standard. Furthermore, electricity used by the Project's electric-powered equipment would be obtained from the local utility providers, which would be supplied by an increasing percentage of renewable sources, consistent with California's Renewables Portfolio Standard of 33 percent by 2020, 60 percent by December 31, 2030, and 100 percent eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources by December 31, 2045. The Project would also not impede the ability of electricity and transportation fuel producers and suppliers to comply with the Cap-and-Trade Program, which is the primary mechanism that the State is using the achieve the State's GHG reduction goals of AB 32 and SB 32. Discussion of Project-related vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and the Project's consistency with the Ventura County 2040 General Plan as relates to GHG emissions is provided in Section 3.9, "Transportation and Circulation," and Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning," respectively, and concludes that the Project would not have a significant VMT impact and would not conflict with General Plan policies associated with GHG and climate change. As a result, the Project would not conflict with applicable plans for reducing emissions of GHGs and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact AQ-3:

No mitigation required.

Impact AQ-4: Project operations could generate odors. (Less than Significant)

Due to the subjective nature of odor impacts, the number of variables that can influence the potential for an odor impact and the variety of odor sources, there are no quantitative or formulaic methodologies to determine the presence of a significant odor impact.

The intensity of an odor source's operations and its proximity to sensitive receptors influences the potential significance of odor emissions. Odor intensity would decrease rapidly with distance and is not expected to be frequently (or at all) detectable at locations outside of the Project site boundary. Table 6-3 of the "Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines" lists project screening distances for odorous land uses, which includes: wastewater treatment or pumping facilities; landfills; solid waste transfer stations; composting facilities; asphalt batch plants; painting and coating operations; fiberglass operations; food processing facilities; coffee roasters; commercial charbroiling; feed lots/dairies; petroleum refineries, extraction, processing, storage and non-retail marketing facilities; chemical manufacturing facilities; green waste and recycling operations; mushroom farms; rendering plants; and metal smelting plants. The existing site is an aggregate mining facility permitted by the VCAPCD. The Project would continue to operate the site as an aggregate mining facility and would not introduce any new odor-generating uses to the site. The Project is not similar to any of the odorous land uses listed in Table 6-3 of the Ventura County Air Quality Assessment Guidelines.

The Project may generate some minor odorous emissions, primarily from diesel particulate matter emissions from the combustion of diesel fuel. However, the existing site currently generates diesel particulate matter emissions from the combustion of diesel fuel from existing mining activities and has not generated odor complaints in the past, according to VCAPCD records. While the Project would expand the mining area boundary to the east, north, and south, at a distance of approximately 0.15 miles from the nearest residential uses, this buffer distance would still allow for dispersion of the minor amounts of odorous diesel emissions. Diesel-fueled equipment would only operate at this closest distance for short-term durations. Other sensitive uses, such as Sycamore Canyon School, the golf course to the north, an athletic field with baseball diamonds to the southeast, and the Concentra Urgent Care facility to the north, are located at much further distance from the Project site. Therefore, given that the Project is not identified as an odorous land use and that the Project is located on a large site upon which the minor diesel odors will dissipate, and the fact that the existing facility has not generated an odor that generated complaints in the past, objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people are unlikely to result from the Project. Thus, the Project would result in a less than significant odor impact.

Mitigation for Impact AQ-4:

No mitigation required.

Impact AQ-5: Project activities associated with final site reclamation would result in air pollutant and GHG emissions. (Less than Significant)

Following the cessation of mining (in portions of or the entire site), site reclamation activities would generate air pollutant emissions. As described in Chapter 2, "Project Description," Site reclamation would include re-vegetating the bench surfaces with native species compatible with the surrounding area and re-vegetating the floor with an agricultural grazing crop to support cattle. Criteria air pollutant and GHG emissions associated with fill material import for use in reclamation and placement of that material onsite is evaluated as a component of Project operations impacts discussed previously. Thus, on-road haul truck emissions and on-site equipment operation emissions associated with receiving and placing that material is accounted for in the previous impact discussions. For final reclamation, a relatively small number of heavy equipment would be anticipated to be used for final reclamation and would include a backhoe, dozer and wheeled loader. As such, activities would be substantially less intense than Project operations and generate substantially fewer emissions. Final site reclamation activities would be short-term, would not contribute to long-term emissions, and would

cease once reclamation is completed. Therefore, the impact associated with air pollutant and GHG emissions associated with final site reclamation is considered less than significant.

3.4.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative Air Quality Impacts

The cumulative projects as summarized in Section 3.1.5 would generate both short-term (demolition and construction) and long-term air pollutant emissions (primarily motor vehicles). While it may be possible to add emissions from the list of related projects with the Project, it would not provide meaningful data for evaluating cumulative impacts under CEQA because neither the County nor the VCAPCD have established numerical thresholds applicable to the summation of multiple project emissions for comparison purposes. Additionally, emissions from a project have the potential to affect the SCCAB as a whole, and, unlike other environmental issues areas, such as aesthetics or noise, it is not possible to establish a geographical radius from a specific project site where potential cumulative impacts from emissions would be limited. Meteorological factors, such as wind, can disperse pollutants, often times tens of miles downwind from a project site. Therefore, consistent with accepted and established cumulative impact evaluation methodologies, the potential for the Project to result in cumulative impacts from emissions is assessed based on the VCAPCD thresholds.

With implementation of mitigation measure MM AQ-1, Project criteria air pollutant emissions would be below the applicable VCAPCD significance thresholds and would be less than significant both at a Project level and cumulatively. The Project would not exceed the applicable VCAPCD significance thresholds for health risks; therefore, the Project would not result in a cumulatively significant health risk impact. The Project would generate odors and fugitive dust that may be considered a nuisance.

The nearest County of Ventura pending or recently approved project is CUP PL17-0062, which allows for temporary events (specifically outdoor wedding events) and is located at 1735 Pancho Road. Wedding and similar events are limited to Saturdays and Sundays, from 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., for a maximum of 35 days within any given calendar year. This location is over approximately 2,500 feet to the west of the Project site. There are no other County of Ventura pending or recently approved projects in the Project site area. None of the cumulative projects would generate TAC emissions, odors, or fugitive dust affecting the same population as the Project. Therefore, the Project would not result in a cumulatively significant TAC, odor, or nuisance air quality impact.

With respect to population growth and inconsistency with the AQMP, the Project, while located in a non-growth area, would not promote population growth that may exceed the growth assumptions of the AQMP. As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," the Project would employ up to 12 people as equipment and scalehouse operators and maintenance workers. This limited number of workers would not affect population growth for the aggregated non-growth areas. Furthermore, as discussed below, the Project would be consistent with applicable General Plan air quality policies. Therefore, the Project would not conflict with the AQMP or its growth assumptions and AQMP impacts would be cumulatively less than significant.

Cumulative Greenhouse Gas Impacts

According to the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), "GHG impacts are exclusively cumulative impacts; there are no non-cumulative GHG emission impacts from a climate change perspective" (CAPCOA, 2008). A project's GHG emissions typically would be very small in comparison to the State or global GHG emissions and, consequently, they would, in isolation, have no significant direct

impact on climate change. It is global GHG emissions in their aggregate that contribute to climate change, not any single source of GHG emissions alone. Therefore, the analysis of a Project's GHG emissions is inherently a cumulative impact analysis. Project-related GHG emissions would contribute to long-term GHG emissions of other projects. However, as discussed above, the Project would not exceed the applicable significance threshold for GHG emissions and the Project would not conflict with the Ventura County 2040 General Plan which implements the County's Climate Action Plan. Therefore, the Project would not result in a cumulatively significant GHG emissions impact.

3.4.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies, including those associated with air quality and greenhouse gases, is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

SECTION 3.5 – BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

SECTION 3.5–BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

This section provides an evaluation of biological resources impacts associated with the proposed Project. The evaluation uses information from the "Initial Study Biological Assessment Report for Pacific Rock – LU10-0003 (CUP 3817-3), Modification" (ISBA) prepared by Biological Resource Consultants, Inc. (BRC, 2017[1]) included as Appendix C-1 of this EIR and the "Rare Plant Survey and Burrowing Owl Habitat Assessment Results" memorandum" (ESA Memorandum) prepared by Environmental Science Associates (ESA, 2018) and included as Appendix C-2. The biological resources study area is shown on Figure 3.5-1, "Biological Resources Study Area and Cover Types," and includes the existing and proposed CUP areas and an approximately 100 to 300-foot area surrounding the proposed CUP area.

In its October 2, 2017 letter to Ventura County Resource Management Agency Planning Division providing comments on the August 2017 notice of preparation (NOP) for this EIR, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) noted:

> *The existing quarry operation has removed numerous ephemeral and intermittent streams in the Project area and two streams flow into existing culverts. Onsite runoff from these two streams is generally directed into an existing pond and used for agricultural irrigation. CDFW has no records of Notification for stream alterations and or stream diversions in the Project area. In addition, there appear to be habitat disturbances beyond the perimeter of the existing CUP area affecting streams. The EIR should identify non-compliance issues resulting in impacts to sensitive species, habitats, and streams beyond the existing CUP area, and include effective compensatory mitigation and restoration of damaged areas associated with direct, indirect, temporal and cumulative impacts.*

Notwithstanding CDFW's comments, the environmental baseline for the purposes of the biological resources evaluation in this EIR is existing conditions at the site at the time the NOP was circulated. Thus, non-compliance issues that may have occurred prior to circulation of the NOP are not germane to the description of the environmental setting or the impact analysis presented in this section. This approach is consistent with CEQA and does not preclude the County or other resource agencies, including CDFW, from investigating and taking appropriate actions regarding potential non-compliance issues that may have previously occurred at the site.

3.5.1 Setting

3.5.1.1 Description of the Project Site and Adjacent Areas

The Project site includes the existing mining and processing area, an area of existing agricultural use, and adjacent generally undisturbed areas proposed for expansion of the mining operation. The Project site ranges in elevation from approximately 180 to 1,248 feet above mean sea level (amsl). The existing mining area includes generally flat terraced areas where aggregate processing, loading, and related activities are conducted and steep slopes to the north and east where mining has created near-vertical slopes in some areas. The Conejo Mountain Memorial Park is located immediately to the west, beyond which are agricultural fields. Open space and residential neighborhoods are located at higher elevations to the

[1] The April 1, 2019, application submittal to the County includes a 2016 ISBA that was originally submitted to the County with a reclamation plan amendment application in 2016. The 2016 application was superseded in 2017 by a 2017 revised application and was accompanied by a 2017 ISBA. The application was revised again and resubmitted to the County in April 2019. The April 2019 revised application included the 2016 ISBA; however, this biological resources evaluation utilizes the more recent 2017 ISBA, which is included as Appendix C-1 of this EIR.

southeast of the Project site. Open space consisting of steep slopes is located north and northeast of the site and open space with more gradual slopes is located to the south and southeast.

3.5.1.2 Vegetation Communities and Landforms

The Project site contains disturbed areas as well as both native and non-native vegetation. Cover types are illustrated on Figure 3.5-1 and Table 3.5-1, "Cover Types and Acreages within Biological Resources Study Area," lists the plant communities and other landforms that compose the study area. Approximately 80 acres of the study area are disturbed from previous and current mining activities and associated vehicle storage yards. Habitat within the remainder of the study area is dominated by chaparral and coastal sage scrub vegetation communities. Non-native vegetation within the study area generally consists of herbaceous, weedy species; the native plant communities that are generally undisturbed by human activities; however, fires have periodically occurred within and adjacent to the Project site, resulting in successional growth of both native and non-native species.

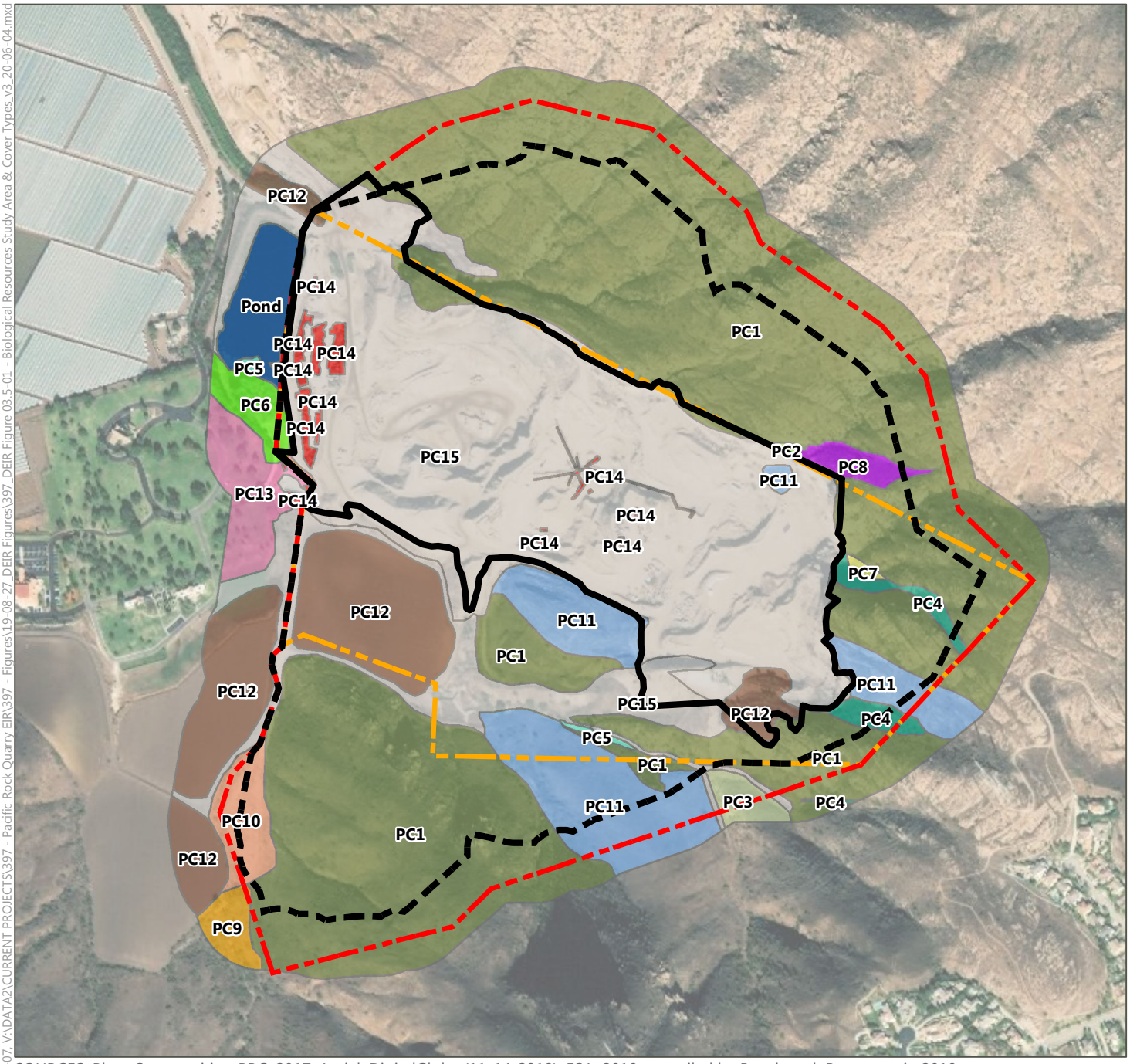
Table 3.5-1. Cover Types and Acreages within Biological Resources Study Area

Plant Community	Acres within Study Area
Laurel Sumac Scrub	120.52
California Sagebrush Scrub	0.14
Deerweed Scrub	1.30
Giant Wild Rye Grasslands	2.04
Cattail Marsh	0.32
Red Willow Thicket	2.01
Mountain Mahogany Scrub	0.23
Disturbed Chamise/Ceonothus Chaparral	1.43
Coast Live Oak Woodland	1.52
Russian Thistle Fields	2.93
Non-Native Annual Grassland	16.38
Agriculture	19
Ornamental	4.25
Developed	1.70
Previously Cleared Land	79.90
Detention Pond	3.73
Total	**257.4**

Source: BRC, 2017.

3.5.1.3 Wildlife

Table 3.5-2, "Wildlife Species Observed within the Project Site," lists wildlife species observed and documented within the study area during field surveys conducted by Impact Sciences in 2010 and BRC in 2016 (field studies conducted by Impact Sciences in 2010 and BRC in 2016 are documented in the BRC 2017 ISBA) and ESA in 2018. The species listed in the table below are generally indicative of the common species that occur in the area and that are expected to be present within the Project site.



SOURCES: Plant Communities–BRC, 2017; Aerial–DigitalGlobe (11-14-2018); ESA, 2019; compiled by Benchmark Resources in 2019

Existing Disturbance Area Boundary
Proposed Mine Area Boundary
Existing CUP Boundary
Proposed CUP Boundary

PC1	Laurel Sumac Scrub	PC9	Coast Live Oak Woodland
PC2	California Sagerush Scrub	PC10	Russian Thistle Fields
PC3	Deerweed Scrub	PC11	Non-Native Annual Grassland
PC4	Giant Wild Rye Grasslands	PC12	Agriculture
PC5	Cattail Marsh	PC13	Ornamental
PC6	Red Willow Thicket	PC14	Developed
PC7	Mountain Mahogany Scrub	PC15	Previously Cleared Land
PC8	Disturbed Chamise/Ceonothus Chapparral	Pond	Pond

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 400 800 1,600 Feet

Biological Resources Study Area and Cover Types
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.5-1

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Table 3.5-2. Wildlife Species Observed within the Project Site

Common Name	Scientific Name
REPTILES	
Great Basin fence lizard	*Sceloporus occidentalis longipes*
Granite spiny lizard	*Sceloporus orcutti*
California side-blotched lizard	*Uta stansburiana elegans*
Coastal whiptail	*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*
San Diego gopher snake	*Pituophis catenifer annectens*
Southern pacific rattlesnake	*Crotalus oreganus helleri*
BIRDS	
Mallard	*Anas platyrhynchos*
Ruddy duck	*Oxyura jamaicensis*
Pied-billed grebe	*Podilymbus podiceps*
American coot	*Fulica americana*
American pipit	*Anthus rubescens*
Ring-necked duck	*Aythya collaris*
Ruddy duck	*Oxyura jamaicensis*
Great blue heron	*Aredea herodias*
Great egret	*Ardea alba*
Snowy egret	*Egretta thula*
Black-crowned night-heron	*Nycticorax nycticorax*
American kestrel	*Falco sparverius*
Red-tailed hawk[1]	*Buteo jamaicensis*
Red-shouldered hawk[1]	*Buteo lineatus*
Sharp-shinned hawk	*Accipter striatus*
Turkey vulture[1]	*Cathartes aura*
Rock pigeon	*Columba livia*
Eurasian collared-dove	*Streptopelia decaocto*
Mourning dove	*Zenaida macroura*
Great horned owl	*Bubo virginianus*
Anna's hummingbird	*Calypte anna*
Allen's hummingbird	*Selasphorus sasin*
Nuttall's woodpecker	*Picoides nuttallii*
Downy woodpecker	*Picoides pubescens*
Black phoebe	*Sayornis nigricans*
Say's phoebe	*Sayornis saya*
Cassin's kingbird	*Tyrannus vociferans*
American crow	*Corvus brachyrhynchos*
California scrub-jay	*Aphelocoma californica*
Common raven	*Corvus corax*
Northern rough-winged swallow	*Stelgidopteryx serripennis*
Cliff swallow[1]	*Petrochelidon pyrrhonota*
Barn swallow[1]	*Hirundo rustica*
Bushtit	*Psaltriparus minimus*
Rock wren	*Salpinctes obsoletus*
Canyon wren	*Catherpes mexicanus*
Bewick's wren	*Thryomanes bewickii*
Northern mockingbird	*Mimus polyglottos*
European starling	*Sturnus vulgaris*
Spotted towhee	*Pipilo maculatus*

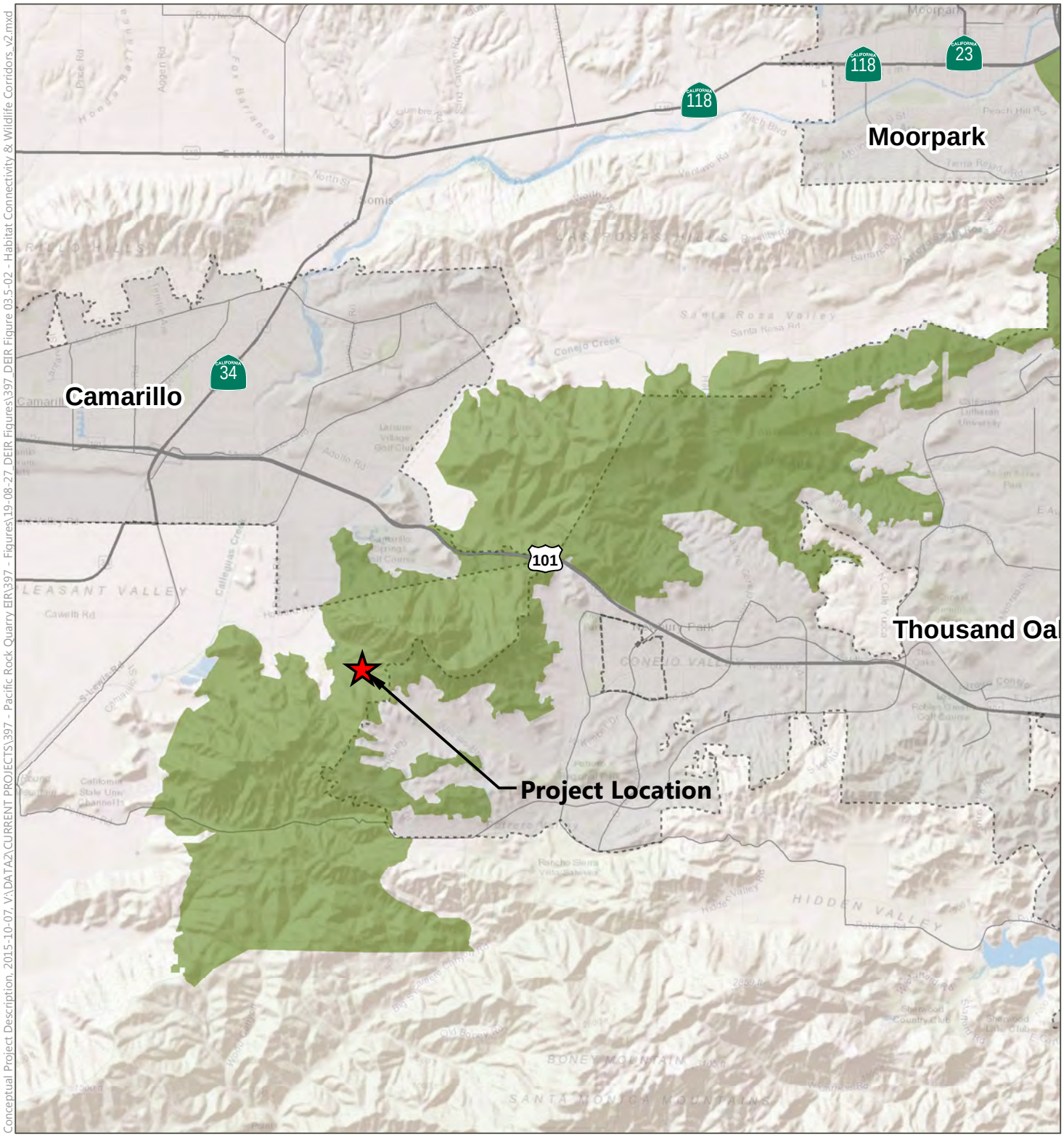
Common Name	Scientific Name
California towhee	*Melozone crissalis*
Southern California rufous-crowned sparrow	*Aimophila ruficeps canescens*
Song sparrow	*Melospize melodia*
Hooded oriole	*Icterus cucullatus*
House finch	*Haemorhous mexicanus*
Lesser goldfinch	*Spinus psaltria*
Loggerhead shrike	*Lanius ludovicianus*
MAMMALS	
Coyote	*Canis latrans*
Botta's pocket gopher	*Thomomys bottae*
Dusky-footed woodrat	*Neotoma fuscipes*
San Diego desert woodrat	*Neotoma lepida intermedia*
California ground squirrel	*Spermophilus beecheyi*
Desert cottontail	*Sylvilagus audubonii*
Northern raccoon	*Procyon lotor*
Southern mule deer	*Odocoileus hemionus*

Sources: BRC, 2017; ESA, 2018.
Notes:
[1.] Observed flying over Project site and/or foraging in general area.

3.5.1.4 Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors

Wildlife movement and habitat connectivity features are present within study area. The Santa Monica – Sierra Madre Connection (Connection) is one of the few coastal to inland connections remaining in the South Coast Ecoregion. The Connection stretches from the Santa Monica Mountains at the coast inland to the jagged peaks of the Santa Susana Mountains and the Sierra Madre Ranges of Los Padres National Forest. The Connection is composed of a rich mosaic of oak woodland, savanna, chaparral, coastal sage scrub, grasslands, and riparian forests and woodlands, and has several major strands to accommodate diverse reptile, bird, and mammal species, and ecosystem functions.

On March 12, 2019, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinance 4537 and on March 19, 2019, the Board adopted Ordinance 4539, collectively establishing regulations for development within habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors and amending the zoning classifications of lots within designated corridors. Ordinance 4539 amended the zoning classifications of lots within the Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors Overlay Zone to including "/HCWC" in the zoning classification indicating their inclusion in the overlay zone. Both of the Project site parcels are within the overlay zone; thus, Ordinance 4539 amended the zoning designation of APN 234-0-060-19 from OS-160 ac to OS-160 ac/HCWC and amended the zoning designation of APN 234-0-060-22 from AE-40 ac to AE-40 ac/HCWC. The Ordinance also amended the zoning designations of each of the parcels adjacent to the Project parcels to add the HCWC classification. As shown on Figure 3.5-2, "Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors," and Figure 3.5-3, "Wildlife Corridors in the Project Vicinity," the entirety of the existing and proposed CUP areas are designated as a habitat connectivity and wildlife corridor area. Additionally, three of the drainages within the Project site (W10, W17, and W23, discussed further at Section 3.5.1.7, below) are identified as "surface water feature buffers" on the County's Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors mapping.



Conceptual Project Description, 2015-10-07, V:\DATA2\CURRENT PROJECTS\397 - Pacific Rock Quarry EIR\397 - Figures\19-08-27_DEIR Figures\397_DEIR Figure 03.5-02 - Habitat Connectivity & Wildlife Corridors_v2.mxd

SOURCES: ESRI World Shaded Relief accessed June 2019, ESRI World Topographic Map accessed June 2019; ESRI World Streetmap, 2009; compiled by Benchmark Resources in 2019

Project Location

County Designated Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors

City Boundary

Highway

Major Road

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles

Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

Figure 3.5-2

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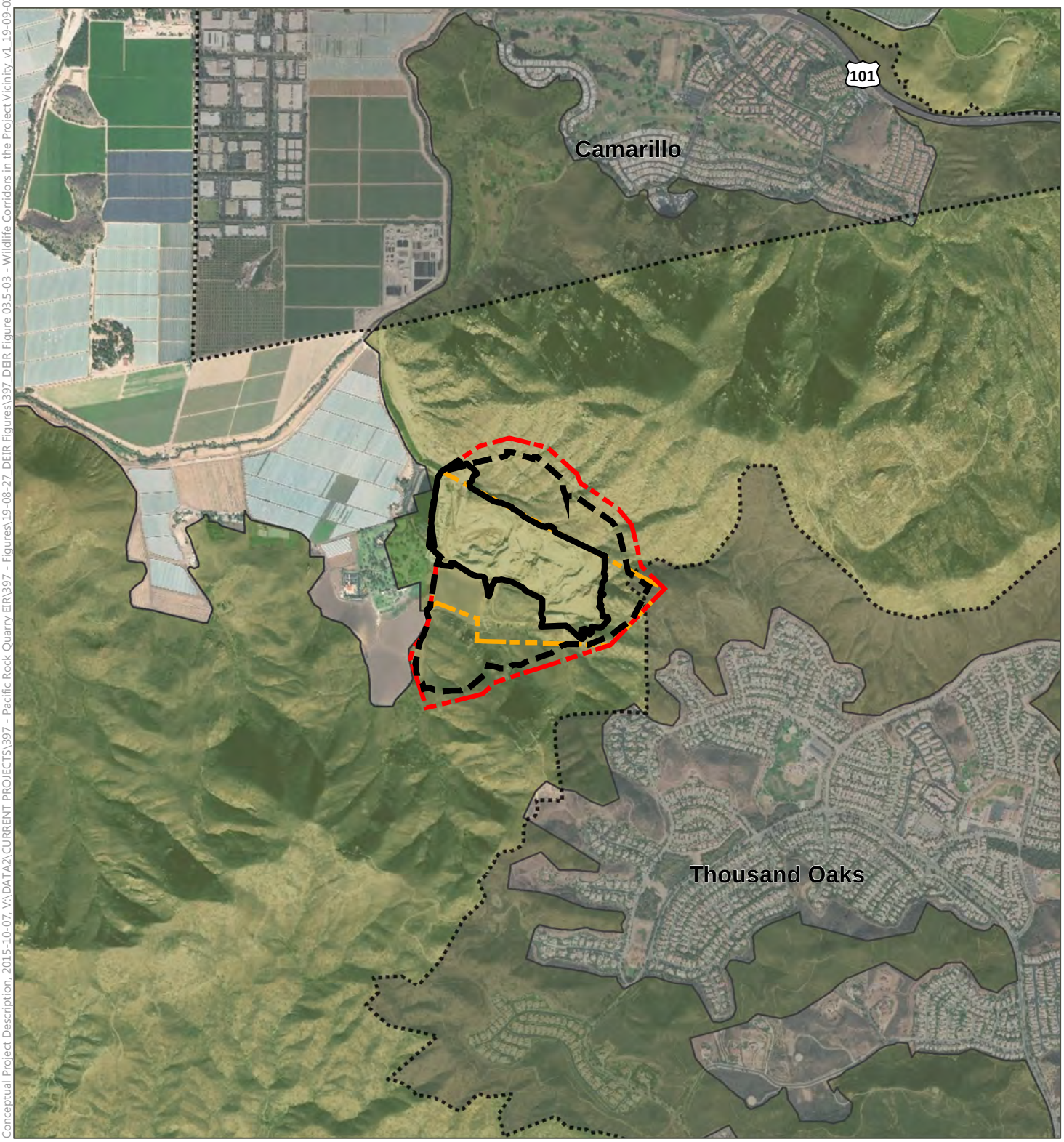

SOURCES: ESRI World Shaded Relief accessed June 2019, ESRI World Topographic Map accessed June 2019; ESRI World Streetmap, 2009; compiled by Benchmark Resources in 2019

- Existing Disturbance Area Boundary
- Proposed Mine Area Boundary
- Existing CUP Boundary
- Proposed CUP Boundary
- County Designated Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors
- City Boundary
- Highway
- Major Road

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

Wildlife Corridors in the Project Vicinity
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.5-3

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Within and adjacent to the study area, the Santa Monica – Sierra Madre Connection consists of an approximately 1,500-foot wide corridor to the southeast of the existing Pacific Rock Quarry disturbance areas, between the existing disturbance areas and residential development to the southeast. This portion of the corridor provides a connection between the Santa Monica Mountains and Conejo Mountain area, and consists of scattered rock outcroppings within Deerweed Scrub and Laurel Sumac Scrub habitats, and provides essential habitat for foraging, cover, and local and regional movement in a generally west-to-east direction. The Connection abuts the north, south, and east edges of the proposed expansion areas. Although the entirety of the existing and proposed CUP areas are designated by the County as habitat connectivity and wildlife corridor area, the 1,500-foot wide area between the existing mining area and residences is considered to provide the primary habitat and movement opportunity between areas to the south and north. While wildlife movement may occasionally occur within the existing disturbed areas of the Project site; however, the limited vegetation and the presence of existing surface mining and processing operations are expected to influence wildlife movement of the existing disturbance areas.

3.5.1.5 Special-Status Plant Species

For the purposes of this evaluation, special-status plant species include:

- Plants listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 17.12 for listed plants and various notices in the Federal Register for proposed species).
- Plants that are candidates for possible future listing as threatened or endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act (Federal Register, December 2, 2016).
- Plants that meet the definitions of rare or endangered species under the CEQA (*State CEQA Guidelines*, Section 15380).
- Plants considered by the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) to be "rare, threatened, or endangered" in California (Lists 1B and 2).
- Plants listed by CNPS as plants about which we need more information and plants of limited distribution (Lists 3 and 4).
- Plants listed or proposed for listing by the State of California as threatened or endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (14 CCR 670.5).
- Plants listed under the California Native Plant Protection Act (California Fish and Game Code 1900 et seq.).
- Plants considered sensitive by other Federal agencies (i.e., U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management), State and local agencies or jurisdictions.
- Plants considered sensitive or unique by the scientific community or occurring at the limits of its natural range (State CEQA Guidelines).
- Ventura County Locally Important Plant Species (updated 2014).

A query of the CDFW California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and CNPS On-line Inventory conducted by ESA (2018) identified seventeen (17) special-status plant species that have been documented within 10-miles of the Project site. Table 3.5-3, "Special-Status Plant Species Observed and Potentially Occurring within the Project Site," lists these species, their current status, the nearest known location relative to the Project site, and the potential to occur on the Project site.

Potential for special-status plant species to occur within the Project site is based on the following criteria:

- **Present** includes special-status species that were confirmed to be present during field surveys conducted on the Project site by BRC in 2016 and/or ESA in 2018.
- **High** potential for occurrence: (1) The habitat on the Project site is the species preferred habitat and is in good condition (i.e., has not been degraded by human disturbance); and/or (2) there is record of the species occurring on or adjacent to the Project site.
- **Moderate** potential for occurrence: (1) The habitat on the Project site is the species preferred habitat, but it has been disturbed or disturbance encompasses the Project site, reducing the quality of the habitat to below a high likelihood that the species would inhabit it; or (2) the habitat on the Project site is not the species preferred habitat, but it contains a similar structure to the preferred habitat and the species has been observed in this habitat type; or (3) the habitat on the Project site is not the species preferred habitat, but there is record of the species occurring in the immediate vicinity of the Project site.
- **Low** potential for occurrence: The habitat on the Project site is not the species preferred habitat, the habitat is highly disturbed, and/or there are no records of the species occurring on or near the Project site.
- No (**None**) potential for occurrence: the habitat does not exist on the Project site and the species requires this habitat for survival.

As shown in Table 3.5-3, special-status plant species observed on the Project site during focused surveys in 2010, 2016 and/or 2018 include Blochman's dudleya, club-haired dudleya, Conejo dudleya, Catalina mariposa lily, Verity's dudleya, Conejo buckwheat, and southern California black walnut.

Special-status plant species with a moderate to high potential to occur within Project site based on the presence of suitable habitat and documented occurrences in the region (BRC, 2017), as well as the results of a CNDDB query conducted in 2018 (ESA 2018), include Plummer's mariposa-lily, Marcescent dudleya, White-veined monardella, Ojai navarretia, Lyon's pentachaeta, and woven-spored lichen.

Table 3.5-3. Special-Status Plant Species Observed and Potentially Occurring within the Project Site

Common Name	Status	Habitat Description	Potential for Occurrence Within or Adjacent to the Project Site
Braunton's milk-vetch (*Astragalus brauntonii*)	FE, CRPR 1B.1, G2, S2	Requires recent burns or disturbed areas on limestone outcrops; usually on sandstone with carbonate layers. Chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland on hilltops, saddles or bowls between hills at elevations of 3-640 meters amsl. Flowering Time: March-July	**None**. Required limestone outcrops are not present on site.
Catalina mariposa-lily (*Calochortus catalinae*)	CRPR 4.2	Occurs in chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland communities between 15 and 700 meters amsl. Flowering Time: March-May	**Present**. Observed within study area in 2010 (BRC, 2017) and 2018 (ESA, 2018).

Common Name	Status	Habitat Description	Potential for Occurrence Within or Adjacent to the Project Site
Plummer's mariposa-lily (*Calochortus plummerae*)	LIS, CRPR 4.2	Occurs on rocky and sandy sites, usually of granitic or alluvial material. Common after fire at elevations of 60-2,500 meters amsl. Found in coastal scrub, chaparral, valley and foothill grassland, cismontane woodland, lower montane coniferous forest. Flowering Time: May-July	**High.** Not documented within study area, but potential to occur is conservatively considered "high" for the purpose of this evaluation, because suitable habitat is present.
Club haired mariposa-lily (*Calochortus clavatus var. clavatus*)	CRPR 4.3		**Present.** Observed within the study area during rare plant surveys in 2018 (ESA, 2018).
Southern tarplant (*Centromadia parryi* ssp. *australis*)	CRPR 1B.1, G3, S2	Often in disturbed sites near the coast at marsh edges; also in alkaline soils sometimes with saltgrass. Sometimes on vernal pool margins. 0-975 meters amsl. Vernally mesic, alkaline habitat is not present on site. Flowering Time: June-October	**None.** Required vernally mesic, alkaline habitat is not present within study area.
Dune larkspur (*Delphinium parryi* ssp. *blochmaniae*)	CRPR 1B.1, S2	Requires maritime chaparral and coastal dunes between 0 and 200 meters amsl. No suitable habitat present. Flowering Time: April-May	**None.** Required maritime chaparral and coastal dunes habitat is not present within study area.
Blochman's dudleya (*Dudleya blochmaniae* ssp. *blochmaniae*)	CRPR 1B.1, G3, S2	Rocky, clay, or serpentine soils in coastal bluff scrub, chaparral, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland communities between 5 and 450 meters amsl. Flowering Time: April-June	**Present.** Observed within study area in 2010 (BRC, 2017) and during rare plant surveys in 2018 (ESA, 2018).
Marcescent dudleya (*Dudleya cymosa* ssp. *marcescens*)	FT, SR, LIS, CRPR 1B.2, S2	Occurs on sheer rock surfaces and rocky volcanic cliffs at elevations of 145-670 meters amsl in chaparral habitats. Flowering Time: May-June	**Moderate.** Suitable habitat is present. Nearest known occurrences is within 3-miles of Project site. Not observed during site surveys. Project site on edge of known range.
Conejo dudleya (*Dudleya parva*)	FT, LIS, CRPR 1B.2, G1, S1	Grows on clay or volcanic substrates in coastal scrub and valley and foothill grassland communities between 60 and 450 meters amsl. Flowering Time: May-July	**Present.** Observed onsite in 2010; however, not observed during focused surveys in 2016 and 2018 (BRC, 2017; ESA, 2018). This species has potential to occur in inaccessible (i.e., steep) portions of the Project site.

Common Name	Status	Habitat Description	Potential for Occurrence Within or Adjacent to the Project Site
Verity's dudleya (*Dudleya verityi*)	FT, LIS, CRPR 1B.1, G1, S1	Occurs on volcanic outcrops in chaparral, cismontane woodland, and coastal scrub communities between 60 and 120 meters amsl. Flowering Time: May-June	**Present.** Observed onsite in 2010; however, not observed during focused surveys in 2016 and 2018 (BRC, 2017; ESA, 2018). This species has potential to occur in inaccessible (i.e., steep) portions of the Project site.
Conejo buckwheat (*Eriogonum crocatum*)	SR, LIS, CRPR 1B.2, G1, S1	Occurs on Conejo volcanic outcrops in chaparral, coastal scrub, valley and foothill grassland communities between 50 and 580 meters amsl. Flowering Time: April-July	**Present.** Observed in 2010 (BRC, 2017) and during rare plant surveys in 2018 (ESA, 2018).
Southern California black walnut (*Juglans californica*)	CRPR 4.2, G3, S3	Occurs in chaparral, cismontane woodland and coastal scrub communities between 50 and 900 meters amsl. Flowering Time: Mar-May	**Present.** Observed onsite in 2010, 2016 and 2018 (BRC, 2017; ESA, 2018).
White-veined monardella (*Monardella hypoleuca* ssp. *hypoleuca*)	LIS, CRPR 1B.3, S2	Found on dry slopes in chaparral, cismontane woodland communities from 50-1,525 meters amsl. Flowering Time: May-October	**Moderate.** None identified during site surveys. Nearest CNDDB occurrence located approximately 4 miles to southeast.
Ojai navarretia (*Navarretia ojaiensis*)	CRPR 1B.1, G2, S2	Openings in chaparral, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland communities between 275 and 620 meters amsl. Flowering Time: May-July	**Moderate.** Suitable habitat is present within the chaparral habitat of the Project site; however, this species has not been observed on the Project site during various field surveys. Nearest CNDDB occurrence located approximately 3 miles to northeast.
Lyon's pentachaeta (*Pentachaeta lyonii*)	FE, SE, CRPR 1B.1, G1, S1	Rocky clay soils of volcanic origin in openings within chaparral, coastal scrub, and valley and foothill grassland communities between 30 and 630 meters. It does not compete well with dense annual grasses or shrubs, but occurs where there is a majority of bare ground. Flowering Time: March-August	**Moderate.** Suitable habitat is present within openings of chaparral, coastal scrub communities; however, this species has not been observed on the Project site during various field surveys. Nearest CNDDB occurrence located approximately 3 miles to northeast.
White rabbit-tobacco (*Pseudoghaphalium leucocephalum*)	CRPR 2B.2, G4, S2	Requires open washes, sandy or gravelly alluvium in chaparral, cismontane woodland, coastal scrub, and riparian woodland habitats between 0 and 2100 meters amsl. Flowering Time: July-October	**None.** No suitable habitat within Project site due to the absence of required alluvium.
Chaparral ragwort (*Senecio aphanactis*)	LIS, CRPR 2B.2, G3, S2	Occurs on drying alkaline flats within chaparral, cismontane woodland, and coastal scrub habitats at elevations from 20 and 855 meters amsl. Flowering Time: February-May	**None.** No suitable alkaline flat habitat is present on the Project site.

Common Name	Status	Habitat Description	Potential for Occurrence Within or Adjacent to the Project Site
Woven-spored lichen (*Texosporium sancti-jacobi*)	CRPR 3, G3, S1	Occurs in open sites; in California with chamise, *Eriogonum* ssp., and *Selaginella* ssp. at elevations of 290-660 meters amsl.	**Moderate.** Considered to have potential to be present because of the presence of chamise, *Eriogonum* spp.; however, this species has not been observed on the Project site during various field surveys. Nearest CNDDB occurrence located approximately 2.8 miles to south.

Sources: BRC, 2017; ESA, 2018.
Notes:
FE: Federally Endangered
FT: Federally Threatened
SE: State Endangered
SR: State Rare
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)/NatureServe Rank
G1 or S1—Critically Imperiled Globally or Subnationally (state)
G2 or S2—Imperiled Globally or Subnationally (state)
G3 or S3—Vulnerable to extirpation or extinction Globally or Subnationally (state)
California Rare Plant Rank (CRPR)
CRPR 1A—California Native Plant Society/CDFW listed as presumed to be extinct
CRPR 1B—California Native Plant Society/CDFW listed as rare or endangered in California and elsewhere
CRPR 2—California Native Plant Society/CDFW listed as rare or endangered in California by more common elsewhere
CRPR 3—California Native Plant Society/CDFW listed as in need of more information
CRPR 4—California Native Plant Society/CDFW listed as of limited distribution or infrequent throughout a broader area in California
LIS: Locally Important Species (Ventura County, 2014)

3.5.1.6 Special-Status Wildlife Species

For the purposes of this evaluation under CEQA and consistent with County environmental review procedures, special-status wildlife species include the following:

- Animals listed or proposed for listing as threatened or endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act (50 CFR 17.11 for listed animals and various notice sin the Federal Register for proposed species).
- Animals that are candidates for possible future listing as threatened or endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act (Federal Register, December 2, 2016).
- Animals that meet the definitions of rare or endangered species under the CEQA (State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15380).
- Animals listed, proposed for listing, or identified as candidate species for listing by the State of California as threatened or endangered under the California Endangered Species Act (14 CCR 670.5).
- Animal species of special concern to the CDFW (Shuford & Gardali, 2008 for birds; Williams, 1986 for mammals; Moyle et al., 1995 for fish; and Jennings & Hayes, 1994 for amphibians and reptiles).
- Animal species that are fully protected in California (California Fish and Game Code, Sections 3511 [birds], 4700 [mammals], and 5050 [reptiles and amphibians]).
- Ventura County Locally Important Animal Species (updated 2014).

The potential for special-status wildlife species to occur in the study area was determined based on site surveys, the presence of suitable habitat for a particular species, and documented occurrences reported to

the CNDDB within 5 miles of the Project site. Table 3.3-4, "Special-Status Wildlife Species Observed and Potentially Occurring within the Project Site," lists special-status wildlife species that have the potential to occur on the Project site. The potential for special-status wildlife species to occur within or adjacent to the Project site is based on the following criteria:

- **Present** includes special-status species that were confirmed to be present during field surveys conducted on the Project site by BRC in 2016 and/or ESA in 2018.
- **High** potential for occurrence: (1) The habitat on the Project site is the species preferred habitat and is in good condition (i.e., has not been degraded by human disturbance); and/or (2) there is record of the species occurring on or adjacent to the Project site.
- **Moderate** potential for occurrence: (1) The habitat on the Project site is the species preferred habitat, but it has been disturbed or disturbance encompasses the Project site, reducing the quality of the habitat to below a high likelihood that the species would inhabit it; or (2) the habitat on the Project site is not the species preferred habitat, but it contains a similar structure to the preferred habitat and the species has been observed in this habitat type; or (3) the habitat on the Project site is not the species preferred habitat, but there is record of the species occurring in the immediate vicinity of the Project site, and there is potential for the species to forage within the habitat on-site.
- **Low** potential for occurrence: The habitat on the Project site is not the species preferred habitat, the habitat is highly disturbed, and/or there are no records of the species occurring on or near the Project site.
- No (**None**) potential for occurrence: the habitat does not exist on the Project site and the species requires this habitat for survival.

Special-status wildlife species observed within the study area during site surveys and therefore considered "present" for the purpose of this evaluation include coastal whiptail, sharp-shinned hawk, loggerhead shrike, and San Diego desert woodrat. Special-status wildlife species with a moderate to high potential to occur in the Project site include Crotch bumble bee, Santa Monica grasshopper, western pond turtle, golden eagle, burrowing owl, coastal California gnatcatcher, yellow warbler, least Bell's vireo, and mountain lion.

Table 3.5-4. Special-Status Wildlife Species Observed and Potentially Occurring within the Project Site

Common Name	Status	Habitat Description	Potential for Occurrence Within or Adjacent to the Project Site
INSECTS			
Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*)	G3, S1, CESAC	Found in areas within food plant genera include *Antirrhinum, Phacelia, Clarkia, Dendromecon, Eschscholzia,* and *Eriogonum.*	**Moderate.** Suitable food plants including *Phacelia* and *Eriogonum* Are present on the Project site. Nearest CNDDB occurrence located approximately 1.9 miles to west.
Santa Monica grasshopper (*Trimerotropis occidentiloides*)	G1, S1	Found on bare hillsides and along dirt trails in chaparral.	**High.** Suitable habitat is found in the chaparral vegetation communities found throughout the Project site.

Common Name	Status	Habitat Description	Potential for Occurrence Within or Adjacent to the Project Site
FISH			
Arroyo chub (*Gilia orcuttii*)	SSC, G2, S2	Requires slow water stream sections with mud or sand bottoms. Feeds heavily on aquatic vegetation and associated invertebrates.	**None**. This species is known to occur within Conejo Creek; however, a hydrologic connection between the Project site and Conejo Creek has not been identified.
Steelhead – southern California DPS (*Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus*)	FE, S1	Requires aquatic habitat with flowing waters.	**None.** No permanent water source suitable for steelhead on the Project site and a hydrologic connection between the Project site and Conejo Creek has not been identified.
REPTILES			
Coastal whiptail (*Aspidoscelis tigris stejnegeri*)	SSC, S3	Found in deserts & semiarid areas with sparse vegetation and open areas. Also found in woodland & riparian areas.	**Present.** Identified by BRC (2017) as observed onsite and potential habitat is found within portions of the Project site.
Two-striped garter snake (*Thamnophis hammondii*)	SSC, S3	Coastal California from vicinity of Salinas to northwest Baja California. From sea to about 7,000 feet elevation. Highly aquatic, found in or near permanent freshwater. Often along stream with rocky beds and riparian growth.	**Low.** There is a low potential that this species may occur within the retention pond located immediately to the west of the Project site.
Western pond turtle (*Emys marmorata*)	SSC, G3, S3	A thoroughly aquatic turtle of ponds, marshes, rivers, streams & irrigation ditches, usually with aquatic vegetation, below 6,000 feet elevation.	**High.** None observed during site surveys. Suitable habitat exits in the retention pond immediately west of the Project site. Nearest CNDDB occurrence located approximately 1.6 miles to northwest.
BIRDS			
Sharp-shinned hawk (*Accipiter striatus*)	WL (nesting)	Prefers riparian areas. North-facing slopes, with plucking perches are critical requirements. Nests usually within 275 feet of water.	**Present.** Observed in 2016 by BRC. Undetermined whether suitable nesting habitat is present within project site.
Golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*)	FP, WL, S3	Requires cliffs for nesting in grassland, chaparral, shrubland, forest, and other vegetated areas. They avoid developed areas and uninterrupted stretches of forest. They are found primarily in mountains up to 12,000 ft.	**Moderate.** Suitable nesting habitat is present within the Project site; however, high levels of disturbance in some portions of the site as a result of existing operations reduce potential for use as nesting habitat. Nearest CNDDB occurrence located approximately 4.2 miles to south.
Burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*)	SSC	Requires low-lying grass-dominated areas located within lower elevations and presence of mammal burrows or manmade structures, such as irrigation pipes, culverts, and debris stockpiles.	**Moderate.** Not observed onsite in 2016, but previously reported as present by Hunt in 2010 (BRC, 2017). No suitable burrows or individual owls were observed during the habitat assessment conducted by ESA in 2018; however, this species has potential to occur in open areas of the grassland communities within and adjacent to

Common Name	Status	Habitat Description	Potential for Occurrence Within or Adjacent to the Project Site
			the Project site (ESA, 2018). Nearest CNDDB occurrence located approximately 1.5 miles from site.
White-tailed kite (*Elanus leucurus*)	FP, S3	Requires open grasslands, meadows, or marshes for foraging close to isolated, dense-topped trees for nesting and perching.	**None**. No suitable habitat within the Project site.
Loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*)	SSC	Inhabits open country with short vegetation and well-shaped shrubs or low trees, particularly those with spines or thorns. They frequent agricultural fields, pastures, old orchards, riparian areas, desert scrublands, savannas, prairies, golf courses, and cemeteries.	**Present.** Observed in 2016 by BRC on the slopes west of the existing quarry. Potential for nesting within or adjacent to the site is undetermined.
Coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*)	FT, SSC, G4, S2	Inhabits dry coastal slopes, washes, and mesas. They are restricted to areas of coastal sage scrub below 2,000 feet in elevation.	**Moderate.** Suitable habitat exists for this species on the lower slopes within and adjacent to the Project site. This species was not detected within during protocol surveys of the existing CUP area conducted in 2010 (BRC, 2017). Nearest CNDDB occurrence located approximately 2.8 miles south of site.
Yellow warbler (*Setophaga petechia*)	SSC	This species is frequently found nesting and foraging in willow thickets and in other riparian plants including cottonwoods, sycamores, ash, and alders.	**High.** Suitable habitat is restricted to red willow thickets located at the southern fringe of the pond west of the site. Not observed on site in 2016 or 2018 surveys, but previously reported as present in existing CUP area in 2010 (BRC, 2017).
Least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*)	FE, SE, G5T2, S2	Summer resident of Southern California in low riparian in vicinity of water or in dry river bottoms; below 2,000 feet. Nests placed along margins of bushes or on twigs projecting into pathways, usually willow, mulefat, and mesquite.	**High.** Observed within red willow thicket in 2010 (BRC, 2017). Suitable habitat is located within the red willow thickets located on the southern fringe of the pond west of the site.
MAMMALS			
San Diego desert woodrat (*Neotoma lepida intermedia*)	SSC, S3	Occurs in moderate to dense canopies. They are particularly abundance in rock outcrops, rocky cliffs, and slopes within coastal scrub.	**Present.** Middens and individuals trapped during focused surveys of the existing CUP area in 2010 and middens observed in 2016 (BRC, 2017).
Mountain lion (*Puma concolor*)	CESAC	Inhabit a wide range of ecosystems, making their home anywhere there is shelter and prey, including mountains, forests, deserts, and wetlands. They are territorial and have naturally low population densities, which means the species requires large swaths of habitat to thrive. Present in the Santa Monica Mountains west from Ventura and east	**Moderate.** Mountain lion is known to be present within the Santa Monica Mountains and its range includes open space areas adjacent to the project site (CDFW, 2020).

Common Name	Status	Habitat Description	Potential for Occurrence Within or Adjacent to the Project Site
		into Los Angeles, south of the 101 Freeway between the I-405 and Camarillo Springs (Point Mugu, Malibu Creek, and Topanga State Parks).	

Sources: BRC, 2017; ESA, 2018.
Notes:
FE: Federally Endangered
FT: Federally Threatened
SE: California Endangered
SR: California Rare
SSC: California Species of Special Concern
FP: California Fully Protected Species
WL: California Watch List Species
CESAC: California Endangered Species Act Candidate for Listing
CDFW/NatureServe Rank
G1 or S1 – Critically Imperiled Globally or Subnationally (state)
G2 or S2 – Imperiled Globally or Subnationally (state)
G3 or S3 – Vulnerable to extirpation or extinction Globally or Subnationally (state)

3.5.1.7 Waters and Wetlands

Multiple ephemeral drainages exist within Project site that flow into onsite detention basins or the pond located west the site. A total of 24 water features (recognized as W1-W24 in the ISBA) were identified within the Project site and survey area in 2016 (BRC, 2017) as shown on Figure 3.5-4, "Waters and Wetlands," and as listed in Table 3.5-5, "Waters and Wetlands Summary." A formal delineation of jurisdictional waters has not been conducted to define the specific physical and jurisdictional attributes of drainages and other waters and wetland features at the site. However, site surveys and data collection provide information regarding the locations and size (i.e., length of ephemeral drainages and area of the one detention pond in the study area) of features within and adjacent to the site sufficient to inform the impact analysis in this EIR. Until such time as a formal delineation of jurisdictional waters is prepared and all required reviews and approvals are obtained from regulatory agencies, all such features are considered to have the potential to be waters of the U.S. and/or waters of the State.

Eight natural ephemeral drainages (W1-W8) exist in the northwestern and north-central portions of the study area. W1 through W7 are tributaries to W8. The existing mining operation has disconnected W8 as a result of installation of a culvert (C3 on Figure 3.5-4) that conveys flows to the detention pond (W24). Additionally, seven natural ephemeral drainages (W9 through W15) exist in the east-central portion of the study area but have also been disconnected by the existing mining operation. The accumulation of sheet flow in these drainages is collected at the lowest point of the quarry and conveyed by culvert (C2 on Figure 3.5-4) that also feeds into the detention pond (W24).

With the exception of the 3.75-acre detention pond west of the site (W24), all of the water features within the study area deliver ephemeral or intermittent surface flows, have a defined bed and bank (some also flow through man-made culverts that have been installed within the existing CUP area as discussed further below), and generally flow in a westerly direction until they are ultimately impounded in the detention pond west of the site (W24).

Ephemeral and intermittent flows in the onsite drainages can serve as an indirect tributary to Conejo Creek, which is a Traditional Navigable Water (i.e., federally regulated watercourse) and a regionally important

stream drainage for a substantial portion of southern Ventura County. However, surface water flows from the Project site converge with Conejo Creek via an off-site swale only during high flow events when runoff into the detention pond overtop the pond's outflow elevation. As such, on-site drainages do not hold regional significance as they primarily drain onto the immediate property and their flows are contained on-site. The man-made detention pond (W24) is located outside of and adjacent to the western boundary of the Project site between the existing mining operation and Conejo Creek. The detention pond composes a lacustrine system (i.e., a limnetic and littoral-emergent wetland).

The pond is bounded by willow woodlands, supports a persistent stand of emergent vegetation (e.g., bulrush and cattail) throughout much of the entire littoral zone, and is hydrologically connected to other downstream waters or wetlands only during periods of high runoff as discussed above. The detention pond is used by the existing mining operation and others as a water source for commercial operations.

Table 3.5-5 summarizes the water features identified on Figure 3.5-3. As noted in Table 3.5-5, drainages W10, W17, and W23 are each identified on the Ventura County Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors Map as a "surface water feature buffer." The relevance of these drainages to wildlife movement is discussed further at Section 3.5.1.4.

Table 3.5-5. Waters and Wetlands Summary

ID #	Water/Wetland Type	Drainage Size (length in feet or acreage where noted)	Hydrological Status	Primary Water Source	Habitat Conditions
W1	Ephemeral drainage	842	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W2	Ephemeral drainage	1,226	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W3	Ephemeral drainage	1,062	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W4	Ephemeral drainage	552	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W5	Ephemeral drainage	829	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W6	Ephemeral drainage	308	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.

ID #	Water/Wetland Type	Drainage Size (length in feet or acreage where noted)	Hydrological Status	Primary Water Source	Habitat Conditions
W7	Ephemeral drainage	980	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W8	Ephemeral drainage	988	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff. Features W1-W7 serve as tributaries to W8.	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W9	Ephemeral drainage	714	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W10	Ephemeral drainage	910	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species. W10 is identified on the Ventura County Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors Map (discussed at Section 3.5.1.4) as a "surface water feature buffer."
W11	Ephemeral drainage	322	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W12	Ephemeral drainage	981	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W13	Ephemeral drainage	894	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W14	Ephemeral drainage	212	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W15	Ephemeral drainage	946	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W16	Ephemeral drainage	555	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.

ID #	Water/Wetland Type	Drainage Size (length in feet or acreage where noted)	Hydrological Status	Primary Water Source	Habitat Conditions
W17	Intermittent drainage	2,046	Ponded	Annual spring, precipitation, groundwater, natural and agricultural runoff. Features W18-W21 serve as tributaries to W17.	Intermittent drainage within moderately disturbed sumac scrub and contains a small section of cattail marsh habitat within bed and bank. Moderately disturbed with few invasive species. W17 is identified on the Ventura County Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors Map (discussed at Section 3.5.1.4) as a "surface water feature buffer."
W18	Ephemeral drainage	154	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W19	Ephemeral drainage	292	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W20	Ephemeral drainage	1,070	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W21	Ephemeral drainage	796	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W22	Ephemeral drainage	678	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage contains healthy, moderately disturbed chaparral and few invasive species.
W23	Ephemeral drainage	2,405	Dry	Precipitation, natural runoff	Ephemeral drainage that runs through small section of oak woodland and then borders agricultural fields running in a northerly direction. Relatively disturbed in sections adjacent to agricultural fields. Contains numerous invasive species. The northern (downstream) section of W23 is identified on the Ventura County Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors Map (discussed at Section 3.5.1.4) as a "surface water feature buffer."

ID #	Water/Wetland Type	Drainage Size (length in feet or acreage where noted)	Hydrological Status	Primary Water Source	Habitat Conditions
W24	Detention Pond	3.75 acres	Ponded	Precipitation, groundwater, natural and agricultural runoff. Artificially impounded	The detention pond contains habitat for multiple federal, state, and CDFW listed species including least bell's vireo, yellow warbler, and western pond turtle. The feature is situated immediately adjacent to existing mining operations and captures all runoff from the facility. Consequently, this feature receives moderately high levels of continual disturbance.
W24B1	100-foot area around W24. The feature provides suitable habitat for special-status wildlife species.				

Source: BRC, 2017.

3.5.1.8 Protected Trees

Trees that are protected in accordance with the Ventura County Tree Protection Ordinance are present within the Project site. Table 3.5-6, Protected Trees within Study Area," provides a list of the trees or tree clusters that have been inventoried within the study area. Under the Ventura County Tree Protection Ordinance, southern California black walnut trees are protected because they are ranked CNPS (CRPR) 4.2, which is defined as a plant or tree that is being watched due to its limited distribution, and the species is facing a moderate degree and immediacy of threat. Additionally, trees of any species measuring 90 inches in girth for single-trunk or 72 inches for multiple-trunk are considered to have "heritage" status and are also protected under the County ordinance.

Three heritage coast live oak trees and 25 southern California black walnut trees are located within the study area.

Table 3.5-6. Protected Trees within Study Area

ID #	Species	Common Name and Characteristic	Girth (Circumference)
T1	*Juglans californica*	Southern California black walnut (Multi-stem)	10 stems each 1.5"
T2	*Juglans californica*	Southern California black walnut (Sapling)	13 saplings <1"
T3	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak (Multitrunk)	39", 44", 20" (Heritage)
T4	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak	115.5" (Heritage)
T5	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak (Multitrunk)	14", 15.5",8.5",9.5" ,8.5", 7.5",8.5", 14.5" (Heritage)
T6	*Juglans californica*	Southern California black walnut (Multi-stem)	7 stems each 1.5"
T7	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak (Multitrunk)	6", 5", 3.5"
T8	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak	87.5"
T9	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak	82"
T10	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak	80"
T11	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak (Multi-stem)	27" and 51"

ID #	Species	Common Name and Characteristic	Girth (Circumference)
T12	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak (Multi-stem)	32″, 47″, and 37″
T13	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak (Multi-stem)	10″ and 7″
T14	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak (Multi-stem)	8″, 9″, 13″, and 4″
T15	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak	Estimated 60″
T16	*Quercus agrifolia*	Coast live oak	Estimated 60″

3.5.1.9 Regulatory Setting

This subsection summarizes federal, state, and local regulations, permits, and policies pertaining to biological resources and wetlands considered for applicability to the Project.

Federal Endangered Species Act

USFWS, which has jurisdiction over plants, wildlife, and most freshwater fish, and NMFS, which has jurisdiction over anadromous fish, marine fish, and marine mammals, oversee implementation of FESA to ensure that federal agencies' actions do not jeopardize the continued existence of a listed species or destroy or adversely modify critical habitat for listed species. A federal agency is required to consult with USFWS and NMFS if it determines that its decision may affect a listed species under the agency's jurisdiction. FESA prohibits the "take" of any fish or wildlife species listed as threatened or endangered, including the destruction of habitat that could hinder species recovery.

FESA Section 9 take prohibition applies only to wildlife and fish species that are listed as threatened or endangered. Candidate species and species that are proposed for listing or are under petition for listing receive no protection under Section 9. Section 9 also prohibits the removal, possession, damage or destruction of any endangered plant from federal land, as well as acts to remove, cut, dig up, damage, or destroy an endangered plant species in nonfederal areas in knowing violation of any state law or in the course of criminal trespass.

FESA Section 10 requires the issuance of an "incidental take" permit before any public or private action may be taken that would potentially harm, harass, injure, kill, capture, collect, or otherwise hurt (i.e., take) any individual of an endangered or threatened species. The permit requires preparation and implementation of a habitat conservation plan that would offset the take of individuals that may occur incidental to implementation of otherwise lawful activities, by providing for the overall preservation of the affected species through specific conservation measures.

Under FESA, the Secretary of the Interior (or the Secretary of Commerce, as appropriate) formally designates critical habitat for certain federally listed species and publishes these designations in the Federal Register. Critical habitat is not automatically designated for all federally listed species; thus, many do not have designated critical habitat.

Critical habitat is defined as the specific areas that are essential to the conservation of a federally listed species, and that may require special management consideration or protection. Critical habitat is determined using the best available scientific information about the physical and biological needs of the species. These needs, or primary constituent elements, include: space for individual and population growth and for normal behavior; food, water, light, air, minerals, or other nutritional or physiological needs; cover or shelter; sites for breeding, reproduction, and rearing of offspring; and habitat that is protected from disturbance or is representative of the historical geographic and ecological distribution of a species.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act

The Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) (16 USC, §703, Supplement I, 1989) prohibits killing, possessing, or trading in migratory birds, except in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior. This act encompasses whole birds, parts of birds, and bird nests and eggs. An April 11, 2018 USFWS memorandum indicates that the MBTA's prohibitions on take apply when the purpose of an action is to take migratory birds, their eggs, or their nests. Therefore, take occurring as the result of an activity, the purpose of which is not to take birds, eggs or nests, is not prohibited by the MBTA.

Surface Mining and Reclamation Act

Regulations implementing the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act require that the reclamation of mined lands be implemented in conformance with specified standards (14 CCR §3700 et seq.). Standards regarding wildlife habitat and stream protection are outlined below.

Wildlife and wildlife habitat shall be protected in accordance with the following standards:

(a) Rare, threatened or endangered species as listed by [CDFW], (14 CCR, §§670.2 - 670.5) or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, (50 CFR 17.11 and 17.12) or species of special concern as listed by [CDFW] in the Special Animals List, Natural Diversity Data Base, and their respective habitat, shall be conserved as prescribed by [FESA] and the California Endangered Species Act, Fish and Game Code §2050 et seq. If avoidance cannot be achieved through the available alternatives, mitigation shall be proposed in accordance with the provisions of the California Endangered Species Act, Fish and Game Code §2050 et seq., and the [FESA].

(b) Wildlife habitat shall be established on disturbed land in a condition at least as good as that which existed before the lands were disturbed by surface mining operations, unless the proposed end use precludes its use as wildlife habitat or the approved reclamation plan establishes a different habitat type than that which existed prior to mining.

(c) Wetland habitat shall be avoided. Any wetland habitat impacted as a consequence of surface mining operations shall be mitigated at a minimum of one to one ratio for wetland habitat acreage and wetland habitat value.

Streams, including surface water and groundwater, shall be protected in accordance with the following standards:

(a) Surface and groundwater shall be protected from siltation and pollutants which may diminish water quality as required by Federal Clean Water Act §301 et seq. (33 U.S.C. §1311) and §404 et seq. (33 U.S.C. §1344), the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act §13000 et seq., County anti-siltation ordinances, the Regional Water Quality Control Board or the State Water Resources Control Board.

(b) In-stream surface mining operations shall be conducted in compliance with Section 16000 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code, §404 of the Clean Water Act, and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. §403).

(c) Extraction of sand and gravel from river channels shall be regulated to control channel degradation in order to prevent undermining of bridge supports, exposure of pipelines or other structures buried within the channel, loss of spawning habitat, lowering of ground water levels, destruction of riparian vegetation, and increased stream bank erosion (exceptions may be specified in the approved reclamation plan). Changes in channel elevations and bank erosion shall be evaluated

annually using records of annual extraction quantities and benchmarked annual cross sections and/or sequential aerial photographs to determine appropriate extraction locations and rates.

(d) In accordance with requirements of the California Fish and Game Code §1600 et seq., instream mining activities shall not cause fish to become entrapped in pools or in off-channel pits, nor shall they restrict spawning or migratory activities.

California Environmental Quality Act

The intent of CEQA is to maintain "high-quality ecological systems and the general welfare of the people of the State." It is the policy of the State to "prevent the elimination of fish or wildlife species due to man's activities, ensure that fish and wildlife populations do not drop below self-perpetuating levels, and preserve for future generations representations of all plant and animal communities and examples of the major periods of California history." CEQA forbids agencies from approving projects with significant adverse impacts when feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures can substantially reduce such impacts.

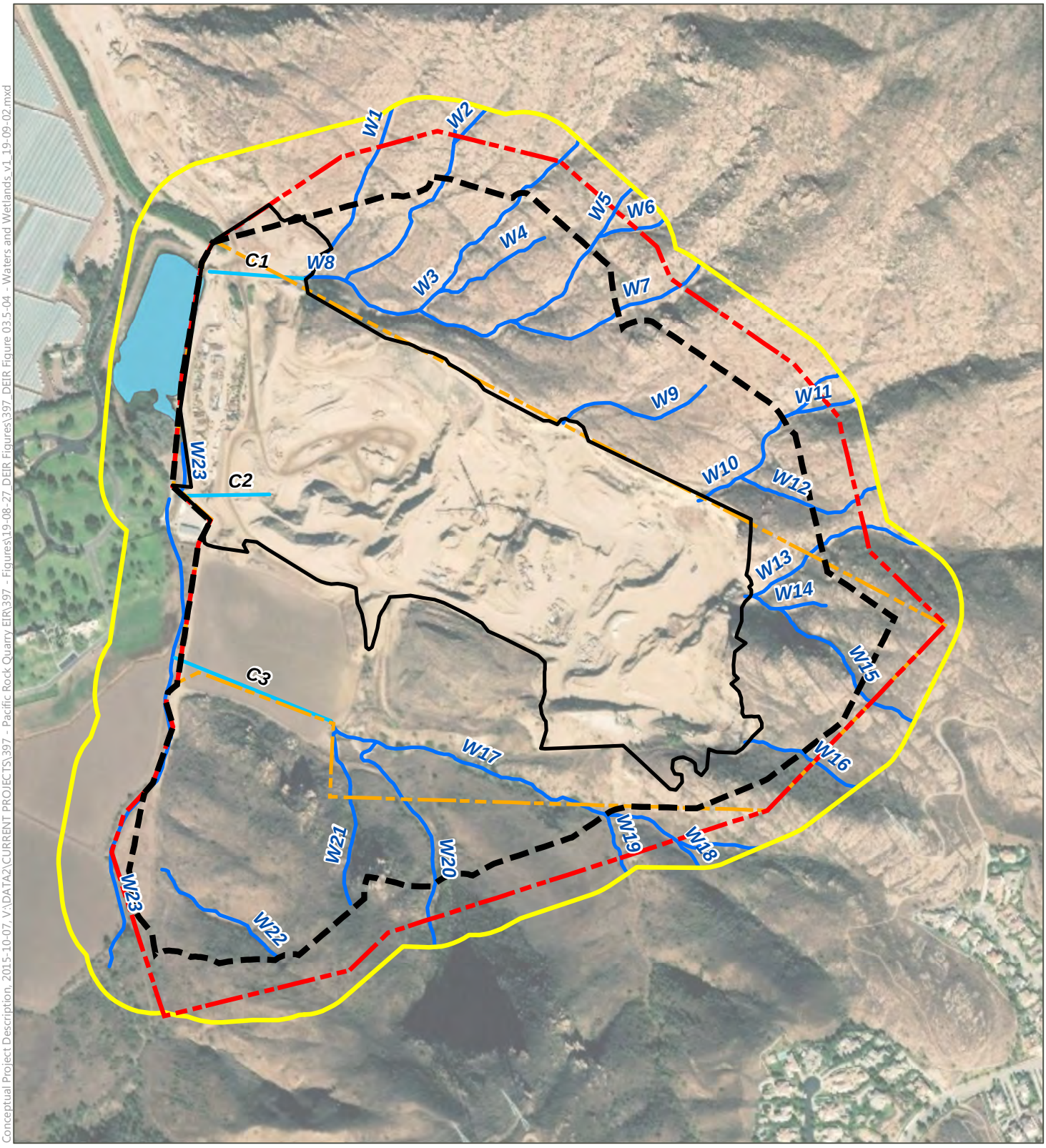
CEQA Guidelines Section 15065(a) indicates that impacts to state- and federally listed rare, threatened, or endangered plants or animals are significant if they significantly reduce the number or restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species. Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15380, impacts to other species ("special status species") that meet certain criteria (i.e., it can be shown that the species' survival in the wild is in jeopardy or it is at risk of becoming endangered in the near future) but are not officially listed also may be considered significant by the lead agency under CEQA, depending on the applicability of other laws (e.g., MBTA) and the discretion of the lead agency. For example, CDFW interprets Lists 1A, 1B, and 2 of the CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California to consist of plants that, in a majority of cases, would qualify for listing as rare, threatened, or endangered. However, the determination of whether an impact is significant is a function of the lead agency, absent the protection of other laws. Projects subject to CEQA review must specifically address potential impacts to listed species and provide mitigation measures if the impact is significant.

California Oak Woodlands Conservation Act

California Senate Bill 1334, the Oak Woodlands Conservation Act, became law on January 1, 2005 and was added to CEQA as Public Resources Code Section 21083.4. This law protects oak woodlands that are not protected under the Z'Berg-Nejedly Forest Practice Act (Pub. Res. Code §§4511-4628). This Act requires a county to determine whether or not a project would result in a significant impact on oak woodlands and, when a project would result in a significant impact on oak woodlands, to implement mitigation measures as prescribed under the Public Resources Code to reduce or compensate for the loss of oak woodlands.

California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15380

Although threatened and endangered species are protected by specific federal and state statutes, CEQA Guidelines Section 15380(b) provides that a species not included on the federal or state list of protected species may be considered rare or endangered if the species can be shown to meet certain specified criteria. These criteria have been modeled after the FESA definition and the FGC section that addresses rare or endangered plants or animals. This section was included in the CEQA Guidelines primarily to deal with situations in which a public agency is reviewing a project that may have a significant effect on, for example, a "candidate species" that has not yet been listed by either USFWS or CDFW.



Conceptual Project Description, 2015-10-07, V:\DATA2\CURRENT PROJECTS\397 - Pacific Rock Quarry EIR\397 - Figures\19-08-27_DEIR Figures\397_DEIR Figure 03.5-04 - Waters and Wetlands_v1_19-09-02.mxd

SOURCES: BioResource Consultants Inc., data recieved in 2019; Aerial–DigitalGlobe (11-14-2018); compiled by Benchmark Resources in 2019

- Existing Disturbance Area Boundary
- Proposed Mine Area Boundary
- Existing CUP Boundary
- Proposed CUP Boundary
- Biological Resources Study Area
- Culvert Connection
- Drainage Feature
- Pond

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 300 600 1,200 Feet

Waters and Wetlands
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.5-4

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Thus, CEQA provides a CEQA lead agency with the ability to protect a species from a project's potential impacts until the respective government agencies have an opportunity to designate the species as protected, if warranted.

California Fish and Game Code

California Endangered Species Act

Under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (FGC §2070 et seq.), CDFW has the responsibility for maintaining a list of threatened and endangered species. CDFW also maintains a list of "candidate species," which are species formally noticed as being under review for addition to either the list of endangered species or the list of threatened species. In addition, CDFW maintains lists of "species of special concern," which serve as "watch lists." Pursuant CESA requirements, an agency reviewing a proposed project within its jurisdiction must determine whether any state-listed endangered or threatened species could be present in the area affected by the project and determine whether the proposed project could have a potentially significant impact on such species. In addition, CDFW encourages informal consultation on any proposed project that may affect a candidate species.

California Native Plant Protection Act

State listing of plant species began in 1977 with the passage of the California Native Plant Protection Act (NPPA), which directed CDFW (then California Department of Fish and Game) to carry out the legislature's intent to "preserve, protect, and enhance endangered plants in this State." The NPPA gave the California Fish and Game Commission the power to designate native plants as endangered or rare and to require permits for collecting, transporting, or selling such plants. CESA expanded upon the original NPPA and enhanced legal protection for plants. CESA established threatened and endangered species categories and grandfathered all rare animals—but not rare plants—into the act as threatened species. Thus, there are three listing categories for plants in California: rare, threatened, and endangered.

Nesting Birds

Under FGC Section 3503, it is unlawful to take, possess, or needlessly destroy the nest or eggs of any bird, except as otherwise provided by this code or any regulation made pursuant thereto. In turn, Section 3503.3 prohibits take, possession, or destruction of any birds in the orders Falconiformes (hawks) or Strigiformes (owls), or of their nests and eggs.

Fully Protected Species

The FGC also allows the designation of a species as Fully Protected (see §3511 regarding birds, §4700 regarding mammals, §5050 regarding reptiles and amphibians, and §5515 regarding fish). This designation provides a greater level of protection than is afforded by CESA, and until recently, fully protected species could not be taken at any time. On October 18, 2011, Senate Bill 618 was signed into law, which permits take of fully protected species where a Natural Communities Conservation Plan has been approved and is being implemented to ensure protection of those species.

Sensitive Natural Communities

Sensitive natural communities are identified as such by CDFW's Natural Heritage Division and include those that are naturally rare and those whose extent has been greatly diminished through changes in land use. The CNDDB tracks 135 such natural communities in the same way that it tracks occurrences of special-status species: information is maintained on each site's location, extent, habitat quality, level

of disturbance, and current protection measures. CDFW is mandated to seek the long-term perpetuation of the areas in which these communities occur. While there is no statewide law that requires protection of all sensitive natural communities, CEQA requires consideration of a project's potential impacts on biological resources of statewide or regional significance.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers—Clean Water Act Section 404

Wetlands and other waters (e.g., rivers, streams, and natural ponds) are a subset of waters of the United States and receive protection under CWA Section 404. The term "waters of the United States," as defined in the Code of Federal Regulations (33 CFR 328.3[a]; 40 CFR 230.3[s]), includes: (1) all waters that are currently used, were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters that are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide; (2) all interstate waters, including interstate wetlands; (3) territorial seas; (4) all impoundments of waters otherwise identified as waters of the United States under this section; (5) all tributaries of waters identified in (1) through (3); (6) all waters adjacent to a water identified in (1) through (5), including wetlands, ponds, lakes, oxbows, impoundments, and similar waters; (7) all prairie potholes, Carolina bays and Delmrva bays, pocosins, western vernal pools, and Texas coastal prairie wetlands where they are determined, on a case-specific basis, to have a significant nexus to a water identified in (1) through (3); and (8) all waters located within the 100-year floodplain of a water identified in (1) through (3) and all waters located within 4,000 feet of the high tide line or ordinary high water mark of a water identified in (1) through (5) where they are determined on a case-specific basis to have a significant nexus to a water identified in (1) through (3).

USACE has primary federal responsibility for administering regulations that concern waters of the United States. In this regard, the USACE acts under two statutory authorities: Rivers and Harbors Act (§§9, 10), which governs specified activities in "navigable waters," and CWA (§404), which governs specified activities in waters of the United States, including wetlands. USACE requires a permit if a project proposes placement of structures within navigable waters and/or alteration of waters of the United States. Some classes of fill activities may be authorized under Regional General or Nationwide permits if specific conditions are met. The Nationwide permit outlines general conditions and may specify project-specific conditions as required by USACE during the Section 404 permitting process. When a project's activities do not meet the conditions for a Nationwide Permit, USACE may issue an Individual Permit or Letter of Permission. USACE has a policy of no net loss of wetlands and typically requires mitigation for all impacts to wetlands before it will issue a permit under CWA Section 404. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has the ultimate authority for designating dredge and fill material disposal sites and can veto the USACE's issuance of a permit to fill jurisdictional waters of the United States.

The federal government also supports a policy of minimizing "the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands." Executive Order 11990 (May 24, 1977) requires that each federal agency take action to minimize the destruction, loss, or degradation of wetlands and to preserve and enhance the natural and beneficial values of wetlands.

Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)—National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES)

The Los Angeles RWQCB regulates waters within the Project area under the Porter-Cologne Act (Water Code §13000 et seq.). Dredging, filling, or excavation of isolated waters constitutes a discharge of waste to waters of the State. Under the Porter-Cologne Act, anyone who discharges waste or proposes to discharge waste within any region that could affect the quality of the waters of the state must file a "report of waste discharge" with the applicable RWQCB. The RWQCB then issues a permit (called "waste discharge

requirements" or WDRs) implementing relevant water quality control plans and taking into consideration the beneficial uses to be protected, the water quality objectives reasonably required for that purpose, other waste discharges, and the need to prevent nuisances (Water Code §13263).

In addition, California has been delegated CWA Section 402 permit authority for the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit program including stormwater permits. Although the issuance of Section 404 permits remains the responsibility of the USACE, the State actively uses its CWA Section 401 water quality certification authority to ensure that Section 404 permits protect state water quality standards. The RWQCB has a policy of no net loss of wetlands and typically requires mitigation for all impacts to wetlands before it will issue a water quality certification under CWA Section 401.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

Under FGC Sections 1600–1616, CDFW regulates activities that would substantially divert, obstruct the natural flow of, or substantially change rivers, streams, and lakes. The jurisdictional limits are defined in Section 1602 as the "bed, channel, or bank of any river, stream, or lake." In practice, CDFW may exert authority over activities near such features that adversely affect fish and wildlife resources associated with them. Activities that would "deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake" are prohibited by CDFW unless a streambed alteration agreement is issued.

Local Plans and Policies

Ventura County General Plan

Goal COS-1 of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the "Ventura County 2040 General Plan" (Ventura County, 2020) is, "To identify, preserve, protect, and restore sensitive biological resources, including federal and state-designated endangered, threatened, rare, or candidate species and their supporting habitats; wetland and riparian habitats; coastal habitats; habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors; and habitats and species identified as "locally important" by the County." General Plan policies associated with biological resources potentially applicable to the Project are identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR.

Ventura County Tree Protection Ordinance

The Ventura County Tree Protection Ordinance applies to the pruning (beyond specified limits), removal, trenching, excavation, or other encroachment into the protected zone (5 feet outside the canopy's edge and a minimum of 15 feet from the trunk) of protected trees in unincorporated areas (land outside of cities). Alterations or removal of protected trees are subject to permits as defined in the Ventura County Coastal Zoning Ordinance (CZO) and the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance (NCZO). In the non-coastal zone, protected trees include all oaks and sycamores 9.5 inches in circumference or larger (measured at least 4.5 feet above ground), trees of any species with a historical designation, trees of any species 90 inches in circumference or larger, and most 9.5-inch in circumference or larger native trees that are located in the Scenic Resources Protection Zone. Before any protected tree is trimmed, removed, or encroached upon, property owners must contact the Planning Division to ensure these activities are conducted in compliance with the Tree Protection Ordinance and obtain a permit for tree modification or removal when applicable.

Ventura County Regulations for Development in Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors

On March 12, 2019, the Ventura County Board of Supervisors adopted Ordinances 4537 and on March 19, 2019, the Board adopted Ordinance 4539, collectively establishing regulations for development within habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors and amending the zoning classifications of lots within designated corridors. Ordinance 4539 amended the zoning classifications of lots within the Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors Overlay Zone to including "/HCWC" in the zoning classification indicating their inclusion in the overlay zone.

The general purposes of the Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors overlay zone as described in Ventura County zoning code Section 8104-7.7, "Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors Overlay Zone," are to preserve functional connectivity for wildlife and vegetation throughout the overlay zone by minimizing direct and indirect barriers, minimizing loss of vegetation and habitat fragmentation and minimizing impacts to those areas that are narrow, impacted or otherwise tenuous with respect to wildlife movement. More specifically, the purposes of the Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors overlay zone include the following:

a. Minimize the indirect impacts to wildlife created by outdoor lighting, such as disorientation of nocturnal species and the disruption of mating, feeding, migrating, and the predator-prey balance.
b. Preserve the functional connectivity and habitat quality of surface water features, due to the vital role they play in providing refuge and resources for wildlife.
c. Protect and enhance wildlife crossing structures to help facilitate safe wildlife passage.
d. Minimize the introduction of invasive plants, which can increase fire risk, reduce water availability, accelerate erosion and flooding, and diminish biodiversity within an ecosystem.
e. Minimize wildlife impermeable fencing, which can create barriers to food and water, shelter, and breeding access to unrelated members of the same species needed to maintain genetic diversity.

County zoning code sections 8104-7.7 and 8109-4.8 provide specific provisions and requirements for lighting and allows for deviations for surface mining operations, requiring that outdoor lighting utilized for surface mining operations, "may deviate from the [otherwise applicable] standards and requirements and shall be specified in a lighting plan approved by the County during the discretionary permitting process for the subject facility or operation. All such lighting shall be designed and operated to minimize impacts on wildlife passage to the extent feasible." The code also contains requirements associated with the installation of fencing, including restrictions on installation of wildlife impermeable fencing, and development or activities affecting surface waters and native vegetation. Discretionary permit applicants are required to submit information to the County addressing the proposed development's consistency with the code requirements.

3.5.2 Impact Analysis

3.5.2.1 Significance Thresholds

The analysis of biological resources impacts considers criteria identified in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G Environmental Checklist for Biological Resources and uses the following significance thresholds from the County's Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG).

Special-Status Species

The following types of impacts to plant and animal species or their habitats are considered potentially significant:

- Loss of one or more individuals, or the occupied habitat or USFS-designated Critical Habitat for, a species listed as Endangered, Threatened or Rare under the FESA or CESA, a species under review as a candidate for listing under FESA or CESA, or a California Fully Protected Species listed in the California Fish and Game Code.
- Elimination or potential to eliminate one or more element occurrences[2] of a special-status species[3] not otherwise listed under the federal Endangered Species Act or California Endangered Species Act, or as a Candidate Species or California Fully Protected Species.
- Impacts that would threaten the viability of a habitat that sustains a population of a special-status wildlife species.
- Impacts that would restrict the reproductive capacity of a special-status species.
- Take of birds protected under the California Fish and Game Code and the Federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.
- Increases in noise and/or nighttime lighting to a level above ambient levels that would adversely affect a special status species.
- Increases in human access, predation or competition from domestic animals, pests or exotic species, or other indirect impacts, to levels that would adversely affect special status species.
- Impacts severe enough to substantially reduce the habitat of a wildlife species or cause a wildlife population to decline substantially or drop below self-sustaining levels, pursuant to Section 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines, Mandatory Findings of Significance.

Sensitive Plant Communities

The following types of impacts to sensitive plant communities[4] are considered potentially significant:

- Construction, grading, clearing, or other activities that would temporarily or permanently remove sensitive plant communities. Temporary impacts to sensitive plant communities would be considered significant unless the sensitive plant community is restored once the temporary impact is complete.

[2] Element Occurrence: defined as a biological unit that has practical conservation value for a species or ecological community and sustains or contributes to the survival of a species or ecological community. For plants, a population or group of populations found within 0.25 miles and not separated by significant habitat discontinuities. For animals with limited mobility, a breeding population. For mobile animals, the location of breeding areas or parts of the range of a mobile population that contribute to the persistence of that population, such as roosts, overwintering areas, migration areas and staging areas.

[3] Special Status Species: defined as species listed as Endangered, Threatened, or Rare under the federal or state Endangered Species Acts, Candidate Species, California Fully Protected Species, and, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15380(d), all other species considered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife to be those species of greatest conservation concern, and locally important species as defined by the Ventura County General Plan. Includes plant species with a California Native Plant Society Rank of 1 (plants presumed extinct in California, or rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere), 2 (plants that are rare, threatened, or endangered in California but more common elsewhere) or 4 (plants of limited distribution in California).

[4] Sensitive Plant Communities: defined as plant communities that are ranked as G1 or S1 (critically imperiled globally or sub-nationally [state]), G2 or S2 (imperiled), or G3 or S3 (vulnerable to extirpation or extinction) through NatureServe's Natural Heritage Program and the California Natural Diversity Database; and oak woodlands, pursuant to Section 21083.4 of the California Public Resources Code.

- Indirect impacts resulting from Project operation at levels that would degrade the health of a sensitive plant community.

Waters and Wetlands

The following types of impacts to waters and wetlands[5] are considered potentially significant:

- Any of the following activities that would adversely affect waters and wetlands: removal of vegetation, grading, obstruction or diversion of water flow, change in velocity, siltation, volume of flow, or runoff rate, placement of fill, placement of structures, construction of a road crossing, placement of culverts or other underground piping, and/or any disturbance of the substratum.
- Disruptions to wetland or riparian plant communities that would isolate or substantially interrupt contiguous habitats, block seed dispersal routes, or increase vulnerability of wetland species to exotic weed invasion or local extirpation.
- Interference with ongoing maintenance of hydrological conditions in a water or wetland.
- Inadequate buffer for protecting the functions and values of existing waters or wetlands. Ventura County General Plan Policy 1.5.2-4 requires a minimum buffer of 100 feet from significant wetland habitat.

Habitat Connectivity

A project would impact habitat connectivity if it would: (a) remove habitat within a wildlife movement corridor[6]; (b) isolate habitat; (c) construct or create barriers that impede fish and/or wildlife movement, migration or long-term connectivity; or (d) intimidate fish or wildlife via the introduction of noise, light, development or increased human presence. The following types of impacts to habitat connectivity are considered potentially significant:

- A habitat connectivity feature (e.g., a linkage, corridor, chokepoint or stepping stone) would be severed, substantially interfered with, or potentially blocked.
- Wildlife access to foraging habitat, breeding habitat, water sources, or other areas necessary for their reproduction would be prevented or substantially interfered with.
- Wildlife would be forced to use routes that endanger their survival.
- Lighting, noise, domestic animals, or other indirect impacts that could hinder or discourage fish and/or wildlife movement within habitat connectivity feature (e.g., a linkage, corridor, chokepoint or stepping stone) would be introduced.
- The width of linkage, corridor or chokepoint would be reduced to less than the sufficient width for movement of the target species (the species relying upon the connectivity feature). The adequacy of the width shall be based on the biological information for the target species; the quality of the habitat within and adjacent to the linkage, corridor, or chokepoint; topography; and adjacent land uses.

[5] Waters and Wetlands: defined as areas that meet the definition of waters, wetlands or streambeds used by one or more of the following agencies: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Section 404 of the Clean Water Act), CDFW (California Fish and Wildlife Code, Section 1602), the California Coastal Commission (in Coastal Zone only, Section 30121 of the California Coastal Act), or Ventura County (as defined in the Ventura County General Plan).

[6] Wildlife Movement Corridor: defined as a space identifiable by species using it, which facilitates the movement of animals and plants over time between two or more patches of otherwise disjunct habitat. Examples include riparian pathways along streams and creeks and other remaining pathways of natural vegetation between developed areas that are frequented by wildlife moving between habitats.

- For wildlife relying on visual cues for movement, elimination of visual cues that provide visual continuity (i.e., lines-of-sight) across highly constrained wildlife corridors, such as highway crossing structures or stepping stones.

3.5.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts

The Project would result in the conversion of existing plant communities as a result of expanded mining operations. This conversion as well as the ongoing and expanded areas of mining and related activities would have the potential to result in direct and indirect impacts to special-status species and important habitats and wildlife movement corridors, as discussed in the specific enumerated impacts below. Table 3.5-7 below provides a summary of the plant communities and areas that would be impacted. Impacted areas are those that would be converted from the existing plant community to disturbed areas as a result of expanded mining. Although reclamation would resoil and establish vegetation in some areas disturbed by mining, the impact evaluation in this EIR considers the impact of mining-related disturbance and the permanent conversion of existing plant communities.

Table 3.5-7. Plant Communities and Impacted Areas

Plant Community	Acres within Study Area	Acres Impacted by Project	Percent Impacted of Total within Study Area
Laurel Sumac Scrub	120.52	71.02	59%
California Sagebrush Scrub	0.14	0.14	100%
Deerweed Scrub	1.30	0	0
Giant Wild Rye Grasslands	2.04	1.50	74%
Cattail Marsh	0.32	0.19	59%
Red Willow Thicket	2.01	0	0
Mountain Mahogany Scrub	0.23	0.23	100%
Disturbed Chamise/Ceonothus Chaparral	1.43	1.34	94%
Coast Live Oak Woodland	1.52	0	0
Russian Thistle Fields	2.93	1.52	52%
Non-Native Annual Grassland	16.38	11.50	70%
Agriculture	19	10.21	54%
Ornamental	4.25	0.01	0.2%
Developed	1.70	0.29	17%
Previously Cleared Land	79.90	69.03	86%
Detention Pond	3.73	0	0
Total	**257.4**	**166.98**	

Source: BRC, 2017.

Special-Status Species

Impact BIO-1: Project ground disturbance and mining within proposed expansion areas could directly or indirectly impact nesting birds protected by the MBTA and the California Fish and Game Code Section 3503. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

New areas of ground disturbance or other activities associated with mining within proposed expansion area during the bird nesting/breeding season, generally January through September, the Project could adversely affect nesting birds if active nests are present within or adjacent to such activities. Areas

within and adjacent to the Project site provide suitable habitat for nesting birds protected in accordance with the MTBA (16 U.S.C. 704) and California Fish and Game Code Section 3503. Project activities could result in direct adverse impacts to nesting birds due to disturbance or removal of vegetation, which could result in the mortality of nesting birds or their eggs and/or young, if present. In addition, indirect impacts to nesting birds could occur during Project-related activities as a result of elevated noise levels, vibrations associated with blasting and excavation equipment, and nighttime operational lighting. These factors could result in nest abandonment and morality of eggs or young, if present within up to approximately 300 feet for passerines and up to 500 feet for raptors from proposed mine expansion areas. Such impacts would be significant. Mitigation measure MM BIO-1 requires the Permittee to avoid new disturbance during the nesting season and/or conduct pre-disturbance surveys within and adjacent to new disturbance areas and implement measures to avoid direct and indirect impacts to protected nesting bird species if present. Direct and indirect impacts to protected nesting birds would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-1.

Mitigation for Impact BIO-1:

MM BIO-1: *The Permittee shall prevent impacts to birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and shall comply with the requirements specified herein.*

The Permittee shall conduct all demolition, tree removal/trimming, vegetation clearing, and grading activities (collectively, "land clearing activities"), and construction in such a way as to avoid nesting native birds. This can be accomplished by implementing one of the following options:

a. *Timing of land clearing or construction: Prohibit land clearing or construction activities during the breeding and nesting season (January 1 – September 1), in which case the following surveys are not required; or*
b. *Surveys and avoidance of occupied nests: Conduct site-specific surveys prior to land clearing or construction activities during the breeding and nesting season (January 1 – September 1) and avoid occupied bird nests. A County-approved biologist shall conduct surveys to identify any occupied (active) bird nests in the area proposed for disturbance. Occupied nests shall be avoided until juvenile birds have vacated the nest.*

The County-approved biologist shall conduct an initial breeding and nesting bird survey 30 days prior any additional land clearing or construction activities on the Project site. The County-approved biologist shall continue to survey the Project site on a weekly basis, with the last survey completed no more than 3 days prior to the initiation of land clearing activities. The nesting bird survey must cover the development footprint and 300 feet from the development footprint. If occupied (active) nests are found, land clearing activities within a setback area surrounding the nest shall be postponed or halted. Land clearing activities may commence in the setback area when the nest is vacated (juveniles have fledged) provided that there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting, as determined by the County-approved biologist. Land clearing activities can also occur outside of the setback areas. Pursuant to the recommendations of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the required setback is 300 feet for most birds and 500 feet for raptors. This setback can be increased or decreased based on the recommendation of the County-approved biologist and approval from the Planning Division.

The Permittee shall provide to the Planning Division a Survey Report from a County-approved biologist documenting the results of the initial nesting bird survey and a plan for continued surveys and avoidance of nests in accordance with the requirements set forth in this condition (above). Along with the Survey Report, the Permittee shall provide a copy of a signed contract (financial information redacted) with a County-

approved biologist responsible for the surveys, monitoring of any occupied nests discovered, and establishment of mandatory setback areas. The Permittee shall submit to the Planning Division a Mitigation Monitoring Report from a County-approved biologist following land clearing activities documenting actions taken to avoid nesting birds and results.

If land clearing or construction activities will occur between January 1 and September 1, the County-approved biologist shall conduct the nesting bird surveys 30 days prior to initiation of land clearing or construction activities, and weekly thereafter. The last survey for nesting birds shall be conducted no more than 3 days prior to initiation of land clearing or construction activities. The Permittee shall submit the Survey Report documenting the results of the first nesting bird survey and the signed contract to the Planning Division prior to issuance of a zoning clearance for construction. The Permittee shall submit the Mitigation Monitoring Report within 14 days of completion of the land clearing or construction activities.

The Planning Division reviews the Survey Report and signed contract for adequacy prior to issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction. The Planning Division maintains copies of the signed contract, Survey Report, and Mitigation Monitoring Report in the Project file.

Impact BIO-2: Project disturbance within proposed expansion areas would result in the loss of special-status plants. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The Project would result in vegetation removal and ground disturbance within the proposed mine expansion area. These activities would result in the loss of individual special-status plants that are known to be present or have the potential to be present within the expansion areas. The following special-status plant species were documented within the Project site during field surveys conducted in 2010 and 2016 (BRC, 2017) and/or in 2018 (ESA, 2018) and are therefore considered present within the Project site:

- Conejo buckwheat,
- Blochman's dudleya,
- club haired mariposa-lily,
- Catalina mariposa-lily,
- Conejo dudleya,
- Verity's dudleya, and
- Southern California black walnut.

In addition, although not observed during focused surveys conducted in 2018 (ESA, 2018), based on the presence of suitable habitat and documented occurrences in the region, the following plant species are consider to have a high or moderate potential to occur within the Project site:

- Plummer's mariposa lily (high potential)
- Marcescent dudleya (moderate potential)
- White-veined monardella (moderate potential)
- Ojai navarretia (moderate potential),
- Lyon's pentachaeta (moderate potential) and
- woven-spored lichen (moderate potential) (BRC, 2017).

The direct removal or other disturbance to special-status plants resulting from Project-related vegetation removal and ground disturbance is considered significant. Mitigation measure MM BIO-2 requires the Permittee to conduct pre-disturbance surveys for special-status plant species and replace impacted species at a minimum 1:1 ratio in areas that would not be disturbed by subsequent mining or reclamation activities. Implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-2 would reduce potential impacts to special-status plant species to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact BIO-2:

MM BIO-2: *Prior to additional vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities on the Project site, the Permittee shall prepare a special-status plant species mitigation and monitoring plan for review and approval by the Planning Division. At its discretion, the Planning Division may coordinate with the CDFW for CDFW concurrence with the plan prior to Planning Division approval. No disturbance shall occur until written approval of the special-status plant species mitigation and monitoring plan is provided by the Planning Division, and any pre-disturbance mitigation elements of the plan are implemented. The special-status plant species mitigation and monitoring plan shall provide for replacement of any and all impacted special-status plants at a minimum 1:1 ratio within suitable habitat at a site where no future disturbance will occur and such site ("subject property") shall be secured through a conservation easement as specified herein. The plan shall demonstrate the feasibility of enhancing or restoring habitat of all occurrences of special-status plants in selected areas on properties owned or otherwise controlled by the Permittee or its designee to be permanently managed as natural open space without future disturbances. At a minimum, the plan shall include the following:*

1. *The location of the mitigation site(s) in protected/preserved areas within the project site or at a Planning Division- approved location either on the Project site or at an offsite location if an onsite location is not feasible.*
2. *Methods for harvesting seeds or salvaging and transplantation of individual plants to be impacted.*
3. *Measures for propagating the special-status plants that would be impacted (from seed or cuttings) or transferring living specimens from the salvage site to the restoration site.*
4. *Site preparation procedures for the mitigation site and planting procedures.*
5. *An irrigation and maintenance schedule.*
6. *Identification of success criteria and performance standards by which to measure the success of the mitigation site.*
7. *Measures to exclude unauthorized entry into the mitigation areas.*
8. *Contingency measures to implement in the event that mitigation efforts are not successful.*
9. *Identification of responsible parties.*
10. *Adaptive management strategies.*
11. *A five-year maintenance and monitoring program, including annual monitoring reports that will be prepared and submitted to the Planning Division for review.*
12. *Additional provisions as may be required by CDFW.*

The Permittee shall record a conservation easement with the deed to the mitigation area property that includes the land use restrictions and requirements stated herein that are applicable to the portion of property where special-status plant species are replaced pursuant to this measure and where no future disturbance will be permitted. The Permittee shall record the conservation easement to provide notification of the land use restrictions and requirements of this measure. The conservation easement must include a map and legal

description of the areas that are subject to the conservation easement and must include provisions for the long-term maintenance of the areas that are subject to the conservation easement, including (but not limited to) a description of the uses and maintenance activities that will be allowed within the areas that are subject to the conservation easement. The following shall be prohibited within the areas that are subject to the conservation easement:

1. *removal, mining, excavation, or disturbance of the soil or surface rocks or decaying material such as fallen trees;*
2. *dumping, filling, storing, disposal, burying, or stockpiling of any natural or manmade materials;*
3. *erection of buildings or structures of any kind, including, but not limited to, fencing, corrals, advertising signs, antennas, and light poles;*
4. *placement of pavements, concrete, asphalt and similar impervious materials, laying of decomposed granite for pathways, or setting of stones, paving bricks, or timbers;*
5. *operation of dunebuggies, motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, bicycles, mowers, tractors, or any other types of motorized or non-motorized vehicles or equipment;*
6. *removal or alteration of native trees or plants, through such activities as irrigating, mowing, draining, plowing, tilling or disking, except as necessary for controlled burns (for fuel reduction, as regulated by the Ventura County Fire Protection District), removal of non-native species and native habitat restoration or maintenance (which must be under the direction of a qualified biologist);*
7. *application of insecticides or herbicides, poisons, or fertilizers;*
8. *grazing or keeping of cattle, sheep, horses or other livestock, or pet animals;*
9. *agricultural activity of any kind including the harvesting of native materials for commercial purposes;*
10. *planting, introduction, or dispersal of non-native plant or animal species;*
11. *hunting or trapping, except live trapping for purposes of scientific study or removal of non-native species;*
12. *manipulating, impounding or altering any natural watercourse, body of water or water circulation on the [indicate habitat type to be protected], and activities or uses detrimental to water quality, including but not limited to degradation or pollution of any surface or sub-surface waters;*
13. *light pollution (e.g., lighting that is directed towards the [indicate habitat type to be protected]); and*
14. *other activities that damage the existing flora, fauna or hydrologic conditions.*

The conservation easement must be recorded with the Office of County Recorder with the deed for the subject property. The Permittee shall submit a copy of the conservation easement or another mechanism for permanent protection to the Planning Division.

Prior to finalizing the language of the conservation easement the Permittee shall submit a draft of the conservation easement, with all the required attachments, to the Planning Division for review and approval. Prior to additional vegetation clearing or ground disturbance on the Project site, the conservation easement shall be recorded on the property title.

The Planning Division maintains a copy of the recorded conservation easement in the Project file. The Permittee shall submit all future plans to the Planning Division for review and approval to ensure that future projects comply with the conservation easement. The Planning Division has the authority to inspect the property subject to the conservation easement to ensure that it is maintained as required. If the Planning Division confirms that the restricted area has not been maintained as required, enforcement actions may be enacted in accordance with § 8114-3 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

Impact BIO-3: Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Vegetation removal and surface disturbance within proposed expansion areas would create the potential for direct impacts to special-status wildlife species known to occur or having the potential to occur at the Project site. Additionally, Project activities including blasting and excavation in expansion areas and processing of imported concrete and asphalt for recycling would create the potential for direct and indirect effects on special-status wildlife species as a result of noise, lighting, and other factors that could adversely affect habitat conditions within and adjacent to the Project site.

The special-status wildlife species discussed below have either been observed at the site or are considered to have a high or moderate potential to occur on or adjacent to the site.

Burrowing owl. The ISBA (BRC, 2017) concluded that western burrowing owl are known to occur in the region, and therefore, have potential to occur within the low-lying grass-dominated areas located within the lower elevation of the study area. In 2018 site surveys, ESA biologists searched for any sign of burrowing owl presence, including any ground squirrel burrows capable of supporting burrowing owls, as well as feathers, scat, pellets, bone fragments, etc. Burrowing owls are also known to use man-made structures for wintering and breeding, such as irrigation pipes, culverts, and debris stockpiles, each of which are present within the site and were visually inspected by ESA biologists during the 2018 survey. No suitable burrows were observed within the study area and no burrowing owl individuals or sign of presence was observed, and ESA concluded that at the time of the surveys burrowing owls are not expected to occur within the study area. However, due to the potential for burrowing owls to be present within the site and the potential for Project-related ground disturbance activity to adversely affect the owl if present when disturbance occurs, the impact to burrowing owl is considered potentially significant. Mitigation measure MM BIO MM-3(a) requires protocol level burrowing owl surveys to be conducted within 30 days prior to ground disturbance within mine expansion areas and, if identified during surveys, consultation with CDFW and passive relocation of individuals prior to ground disturbance. With implementation of MM BIO-3(a) impacts to burrowing owl would be less than significant.

San Diego desert woodrat. In 2010, this species was documented to occur throughout the chaparral and coastal scrub vegetation communities, and in 2016 desert woodrat middens were observed in the northeastern portion of the Project site (BRC, 2017). This species may also be present in areas supporting dense scrub and chaparral vegetation (Figure 3.5-1). The potential for direct impacts associated with the Project include mortality to individuals and their nests during ground disturbance activities. The potential for indirect impacts include the loss of foraging and nesting habitat from permanent removal of scrub and chaparral vegetation. Mitigation measure MM BIO-3(b) requires pre-disturbance surveys, relocation of individuals, and other measures for protection

of this species through consultation with CDFW. Impacts to San Diego desert woodrats would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-3(b).

Least Bell's vireo and yellow warbler. Focused surveys least Bell's vireo were conducted in 2010 and confirmed that this species was not present within the survey area at that time; however, one yellow warbler was detected in 2010 (BRC, 2017). Suitable habitat for least Bell's vireo and yellow warbler is present within the 2.01 acres of red willow thickets located at the south-end of the detention pond as shown on Figure 3.5-1. Although adjacent to the site, the red willow thicket is outside of the Project site and would not be directly affected by the Project. These are migratory species and are generally present in the region only during their nesting period between approximately April through July. Because the red willow thicket provides suitable habitat, there is a high potential that these species could be present in the future. Project activities could have an indirect impact on least Bell's vireo and yellow warbler if it occurs during their nesting period by generating acute noises and vibrations that can disrupt breeding or cause nest failure. Mitigation measure MM BIO-1 (discussed above under Impact BIO-1) requires the Permittee to avoid new disturbance during the nesting season of special-status bird species and/or conduct pre-disturbance surveys within and adjacent to new disturbance areas and implement measures to avoid direct and indirect impacts to protected nesting bird species if present. With implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-1, as specified at MM BIO-3(c), impacts to least Bell's vireo and yellow warbler would be less than significant.

Golden eagle. Golden eagles typically require cliffs for nesting, and they are known to avoid developed areas and uninterrupted stretches of forest. Although ongoing operation of the quarry, as well as surrounding land uses that include residential development to the east as well as development to the west make it unlikely that a golden eagle would establish a new nest on the Project site, the ISBA (BRC, 2017) determined that there is a moderate potential for this species to nest on the steep cliffs located in the northern portion of the Project site. Implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would ensure that no golden eagles, including any active nests, are impacted by the Project. Mitigation measure MM BIO-1 (discussed above under Impact BIO-1) requires the Permittee to avoid new disturbance during the nesting season of special-status bird species and/or conduct pre-disturbance surveys within and adjacent to new disturbance areas and implement measures to avoid direct and indirect impacts to protected nesting bird species if present. With implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-1, as specified at MM BIO-3(d), impacts to golden eagle would be less than significant.

Coastal California gnatcatcher. Focused surveys coastal California gnatcatcher were conducted in 2010 and determined that this species was not present within the existing CUP boundary and survey area at that time. Coastal California gnatcatcher habitat is generally restricted to the California sagebrush scrub and deerweed scrub as shown on Figure 3.5-1. As indicated in Table 3.5-7, above, there is 0.14 acre of California sagebrush scrub located within the Project site that would be permanently removed as a result of Project operations, and there is 1.30 acres of deerweed scrub present, all of which would not be disturbed by the Project. Project-related activities, including vegetation removal, grading, compaction, and construction, could result in the loss of coastal California gnatcatchers if present within disturbance areas, and could result in indirect impacts from noise and vibration associated with Project activities which could adversely affect nesting gnatcatchers within the Project site and within adjacent habitat. Mitigation measure BIO-3(e) requires pre-disturbance surveys, relocation, and compensatory mitigation for this species

through consultation with CDFW. With implementation of MM BIO-3(e), impacts to coastal California gnatcatcher would be less than significant.

Coastal whiptail. Direct impacts to coastal whiptail could include mortality due to increased operational activities and removal of suitable habitat. Mitigation measure MM BIO-3(f) requires pre-disturbance surveys and relocation provisions for this species. With implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-3(f), impacts to coastal whiptail would be less than significant.

Western pond turtle. The detention pond adjacent to the western portion of the Project site contains habitat for western pond turtle. The pond is situated immediately adjacent to existing mining operations and receives surface water runoff from the Project site. Adverse effects to the pond or its fringe habitat would result in impacts to western pond turtle. Mitigation measure MM BIO-3(g) requires pre-disturbance surveys, agency consultation and habitat compensation provisions for western pond turtle through consultation with CDFW. With implementation of mitigation measure MM BIO-3(g), impacts to western pond turtle would be less than significant.

Crotch bumble bee. Crotch bumble bee prefers areas that are dominated with native vegetation that is associated with a coastal sage scrub community. As shown in Table 3.5-7, the Project would result in the loss of 0.14 acre of California sagebrush scrub that provides potentially suitable habitat for Crotch bumble bee. As depicted on Figure 3.5-1, the 0.14 acre of California sagebrush scrub is located immediately adjacent to the existing quarry to the west and south (i.e., previously cleared land) and chaparral to the north and east. There is a moderate potential for Crotch bumble bee to be present based on the presence plants that are considered suitable habitat for this species. Considering the relatively small amount of habitat that would be impacted by the Project and the large amount of native habitat that is present in the immediate vicinity north and south of the Project site, the loss of 0.14 acre of California sagebrush scrub would not be expected to have the potential to reduce the population of Crotch bumble bee such that it would be below self-sustaining levels. However, this analysis conservatively concludes that the potential loss of sagebrush scrub habitat and associated impact to Crotch bumble bee is significant. Mitigation measure MM BIO-3(h) requires pre-disturbance surveys and habitat preservation or other measures deemed sufficient to reduce or avoid the potential for significant effects to Crotch bumble bee due to the loss of California sagebrush scrub. With the implementation of MM BIO-3(h), impacts to Crotch bumble bee would be less than significant.

Santa Monica grasshopper. Santa Monica grasshopper prefers bare areas within native chaparral communities. As indicated in Table 3.5-7, the Project will result in the loss of 71.02 acres of laurel sumac scrub, 0.23 acre of Mountain mahogany scrub, and 1.34 acres of disturbed chamise/ceonothus chaparral, resulting in a combined loss of 72.59 acres of chaparral vegetation as a result of the Project. These vegetation communities are located to the north-northeast of the existing quarry and are contiguous (i.e., intact) with similar chaparral-dominated communities located within open space areas to the north, northeast, southeast and south. Based on the presence of suitable chaparral habitat, there is a high potential for Santa Monica grasshopper to be present. Permanent impacts to 72.59 acres of chaparral vegetation is considered a significant impact to this species. Mitigation measure MM BIO-3(i) requires pre-disturbance surveys and habitat preservation or other measures deemed sufficient to reduce or avoid the potential for significant effects to Santa Monica grasshopper due to the loss of chaparral vegetation. With the implementation of MM BIO-3(i), impacts to Santa Monica grasshopper would be less than significant.

Mountain lion. In April 2020, the California Fish and Game Commission (CFGC) determined that the Southern California/Central Coast evolutionarily significant unit (ESU) of mountain lions is a candidate species as defined by Section 2068 of the Fish and Game Code. Although no mountain lion observations are documented associated with studies for this EIR, mountain lion are known to be present within the Santa Monica Mountains, which compose much of the range of the Central Coast-South (CC-S) genetic subpopulation identified in the petition on which the CFGC's determination is based. Mountain lions are primarily solitary, territorial, and occur in low density. They require large areas of relatively undisturbed habitat with adequate prey abundance, and habitat connectivity to allow for successful dispersal and gene flow. They have large home ranges that include heterogenous habitats including riparian, chaparral, oak woodlands, coniferous forests, grasslands, and occasionally in rocky desert uplands (*Grinnell 1914, Grinnell et al. 1937, Williams 1986, Dickson et al. 2005, McClanahan et al. 2017*; as cited in CDFW, 2020). The potential for direct impacts associated with the Project include mortality to individuals if present within disturbance areas, including areas of blasting. The potential for indirect impacts includes the loss of habitat, range, and movement corridors, which could affect hunting and foraging opportunities and could limit movement and breeding opportunities limiting reproduction and genetic diversity. Mitigation measure MM BIO-3(j) requires pre-disturbance surveys and other protocols to ensure that mountain lion are excluded from areas of active ground disturbance and blasting associated with the Project, and is considered sufficient to minimize the potential for direct impacts associated with potential mortality of individuals. Potential impacts associated with the Project's reduction of the Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Connection wildlife movement corridor are discussed in Impact BIO-6, below. Mitigation measure MM BIO-6 includes measures that would minimize adverse effects on the corridor and these measures are considered sufficient to minimize adverse effects on mountain lion use and movement within the corridor adjacent to the Project site.

Mitigation for Impact BIO-3:

MM BIO-3(a) *Burrowing Owl—To minimize impacts to nesting/wintering burrowing owls within the mine expansion area, prior to any ground disturbance in proposed expansion areas, the Permittee shall retain a County-approved biologist to conduct protocol-level burrowing owl surveys following CDFW guidelines. Surveys shall be conducted no more than 30 days prior to vegetation removal, and shall be repeated weekly prior to and during ground disturbance in new disturbance areas. If occupied burrows are identified within planned disturbance areas, the Permittee shall consult with CDFW and develop passive relocation methods. The Permittee shall document all surveys and results provide written evidence to the Planning Division verifying that surveys have been conducted prior to disturbance and that any required consultation with, and approval of relocation methods by, CDFW has occurred.*

The Permittee shall provide to the Planning Division a Survey Report from a County-approved biologist that provides the results of the burrowing owl surveys and a plan for avoidance of occupied burrows in accordance with the requirements approved by CDFW. Along with the Survey Report, the Permittee shall provide a copy of a signed contract with the County-approved biologist who will monitor avoidance efforts during land clearing activities. Following the completion of land clearing activities, the Permittee shall submit to the Planning Division a Mitigation Monitoring Report from a County-approved biologist that documents the actions the County-approved biologist implemented to avoid impacts to burrowing owl.

The County-approved biologist shall conduct the survey within 30 days prior to the initiation of land clearing activities. The Permittee shall submit the Survey Report and signed contract to the Planning Division, prior

to issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction. The Mitigation Monitoring Report shall be submitted within 14 days of completion of the land clearing activities.

The Planning Division reviews for adequacy, and maintains in the Project file, the signed contract, Survey Report, and Mitigation Monitoring Report. If the Planning Division confirms that the required surveys and relocation measures were not implemented in compliance with the requirements of this condition, then enforcement actions may be enacted in accordance with § 8114-3 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

MM BIO-3(b) *San Diego Woodrat: Prior to demolition, tree removal/trimming, vegetation clearing, and grading activities (collectively, "land clearing activities"), a County-approved biologist with a California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Scientific Collecting Permit shall survey suitable habitat for woodrats within areas that will be subject to land clearing activities, and within 50 feet of areas that will be subject to land clearing activities.*

If the County-approved biologist does not find any nests, then no further action is required.

If the County-approved biologist finds active woodrat nests during the peak nesting season (February 1 through May 31), the Permittee shall implement a 50-foot radius buffer area around the nests in which land clearing activities will be postponed until the end of peak nesting season, in order to protect the nest. If the County-approved biologist finds active woodrat nests outside of the peak nesting season, a County-approved biological consultant shall relocate the nests according to the following instructions:

a. *Create new habitat on adjacent areas not impacted by the project by providing a vertical structure using local native material such as tree and shrub trimmings stacked horizontally in areas that are under shady canopies and upslope of seasonal drainages. Piling rocks removed from the construction area can also be used to help achieve structure. If multiple nesting material structures are created they should be a minimum of 25 feet apart. The County-approved biologist shall place the new nesting material under shady areas in order to increase the chance that woodrats will use the nests. These areas should be in locations that do not presently provide this habitat structure to create new nesting opportunity and to reduce potential competition with existing woodrats.*
b. *After creating habitat outside of the construction footprint, the County-approved biologist shall begin vegetation clearance around the nest to reduce woodrat dispersal back into the Project site.*
c. *Nudge the nest with a front-end loader type tractor to flush the woodrats from the nest. They will usually abandon the nest and run out into adjacent offsite cover.*
d. *Carefully and slowly pick up the nest material with a front-end loader (to allow any additional woodrats to escape) while maintaining a safe distance from the nest to reduce health hazards to the workers. (Dust masks should be used even when operating equipment.)*
e. *Move the nest material to the creation area and place the nest material adjacent to the created nesting structure.*

The Permittee shall provide to the Planning Division a Survey Report from a County-approved biologist that provides the results of the woodrat survey and a plan for avoidance or relocation of the nests in accordance with the requirements set forth in this condition (above). Along with the Survey Report, the Permittee shall provide a copy of a signed contract with the County-approved biologist who will monitor avoidance and relocation efforts during land clearing activities. Following the completion of land clearing activities, the Permittee shall submit to the Planning Division a Mitigation Monitoring Report from a County-approved

biologist that documents the actions the County-approved biologist implemented to avoid or relocate woodrat nests.

The County-approved biologist shall conduct the survey within 30 days prior to the initiation of land clearing activities. The Permittee shall submit the Survey Report and signed contract to the Planning Division, prior to issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction. The Mitigation Monitoring Report shall be submitted within 14 days of completion of the land clearing activities.

The Planning Division reviews for adequacy, and maintains in the Project file, the signed contract, Survey Report, and Mitigation Monitoring Report. If the Planning Division confirms that the required surveys and relocation measures were not implemented in compliance with the requirements of this condition, then enforcement actions may be enacted in accordance with § 8114-3 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

MM BIO-3(c) *Least Bell's vireo and yellow warbler—Implement MM BIO-1.*

MM BIO-3(d) *Golden Eagle—Implement MM BIO-1.*

MM BIO-3(e) *Coastal California gnatcatcher—The Permittee shall prevent impacts to coastal California gnatcatcher, land clearing activities shall be regulated as specified herein. Prior to all tree removal/trimming, vegetation clearing, and grading activities (collectively, "land clearing activities"), a County-approved biologist authorized under § 10(a)(1)(A) of the Endangered Species Act shall conduct protocol surveys for coastal California gnatcatcher, in accordance with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS') "Coastal California Gnatcatcher (Polioptila californica) Presence/Absence Survey Guidelines" (February 28, 1997). The biologist shall conduct the surveys within one-year of initiating land clearing activities. The survey area must include all areas that will be subject to land clearing activities and the area within 500' of the area that will be subject to land clearing activities. The biologist shall follow this protocol unless otherwise authorized by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) in writing. If surveys confirm the presence of coastal California gnatcatcher on the site, then the Permittee shall implement either one of the following procedures:*

a. *If the Project involves federal permitting or funding (collectively, "federal nexus"), then the Permittee must complete consultation with the federal agency and USFWS pursuant to § 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act; or*
b. *If the Project does not involve a federal nexus, but may result in the take of coastal California gnatcatcher, the Permittee shall apply to the USFWS for an incidental take permit, pursuant to § 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act. To qualify for the incidental take permit, the Permittee shall submit an application to the USFWS together with a habitat conservation plan (HCP) that describes (at a minimum) how the impacts of the proposed taking of coastal California gnatcatcher shall be minimized and mitigated, and how the plan will be funded. See 50 CFR 17.32 for a complete description of the requirements for a HCP.*

The Permittee shall provide to the Planning Division a Survey Report from a County-approved biologist with a Section 10(a)(1)(A) permit under the Endangered Species Act documenting the results of the protocol surveys for coastal California gnatcatcher.

If coastal California gnatcatchers are found during the protocol surveys, the Permittee shall submit the following to the Planning Division:

a. *If the Project involves federal permitting or funding, the Permittee shall submit a copy of one of the following documents: (a) a Biological Opinion issued by the USFWS; or (b) a written concurrence letter from the USFWS stating the Project is unlikely to adversely affect the coastal California gnatcatcher; or*
b. *If the Project does not involve federal permitting or funding, the Permittee shall submit a copy of one of the following documents: (a) an incidental take permit and HCP; or (b) a written concurrence letter from the USFWS stating that the Project is unlikely to adversely affect the coastal California gnatcatcher.*

If (1) the Project site is located within 1 mile of a recorded occurrence of coastal California gnatcatcher, (2) the Project will result in the removal of coastal sage scrub vegetation, and (3) surveys produced no observations of the species, then the Permittee shall submit a letter to the Planning Division prior to the issuance of a Zoning Clearance from USFWS stating:

a. *The Project is not likely to adversely affect the coastal California gnatcatcher pursuant to Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act; and*
b. *The Project is not likely to result in take of the coastal California gnatcatcher pursuant to Section 10 of the Federal Endangered Species Act.*

Prior to the issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction, the Permittee shall provide to the Planning Division a copy of the Survey Report and—if coastal California gnatcatchers are confirmed to be present during the protocol surveys—the Permittee shall also provide a copy of one of the following as appropriate give the requirements set forth above: (a) the Biological Opinion issued by the USFWS; (b) the written concurrence letter from the USFWS stating that the Project is unlikely to adversely affect the coastal California gnatcatcher; or (c) the incidental take permit and HCP.

The biologist shall conduct the protocol surveys within one-year of initiating land clearing activities. If the surveys reveal the presence of coastal California gnatcatcher, then the survey results shall remain valid for three years. If the surveys do not reveal the presence of coastal California gnatcatcher, then the survey results shall remain valid for one year.

If (1) the Project site is located within 1 mile of a recorded occurrence of coastal California gnatcatcher, (2) the Project will result in the removal of coastal sage scrub vegetation, and (3) surveys produced no observations of the species, then the Permittee shall submit the letter to the Planning Division prior to the issuance of a Zoning Clearance.

The Planning Division reviews for adequacy the Survey Report and documents issued by the USFWS prior to issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction. The Planning Division has the authority to inspect the Project site to ensure that the Permittee implements the mitigation measures set forth in the Biological Opinion or HCP (as applicable). If the Planning Division confirms that the Permittee is not maintaining the Project site in compliance with the Biological Opinion or HCP, Planning Division staff has the authority to initiate enforcement actions pursuant to § 8114-3 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

MM BIO-3(f) *Coastal whiptail—Within no more than 72 hours prior to any ground disturbance within areas containing suitable habitat for coastal whiptail, the Permittee shall retain a County-approved biologist to conduct a pre-construction survey for coastal whiptail. If coastal whiptail is identified within the planned disturbance area, the Permittee shall consult with and obtain approval from CDFW for relocation of the individuals to a suitable location approved by CDFW. If relocation is required, provisions shall be made to*

prevent the species reentry to planned disturbance areas. Such provisions may include installation of exclusionary fencing and/or active monitoring by a qualified biologist. All surveys, CDFW coordination and approvals, and actions taken to implement this measure shall be documented in a report prepared by the Permittee's qualified biologist and the report shall be submitted to the Planning Division.

The Permittee shall provide to the Planning Division a Survey Report from a County-approved biologist that provides the results of the coastal whiptail surveys and a plan for avoidance or relocation in accordance with the requirements approved by CDFW. Along with the Survey Report, the Permittee shall provide a copy of a signed contract with the County-approved biologist who will monitor avoidance efforts during land clearing activities. Following the completion of land clearing activities, the Permittee shall submit to the Planning Division a Mitigation Monitoring Report from a County-approved biologist that documents the actions the County-approved biologist implemented to avoid impacts to coastal whiptail.

The County-approved biologist shall conduct the survey within no more than 72 hours prior to the initiation of land clearing activities. The Permittee shall submit the Survey Report and signed contract to the Planning Division, prior to issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction. The Mitigation Monitoring Report shall be submitted within 14 days of completion of the land clearing activities.

The Planning Division reviews for adequacy, and maintains in the Project file, the signed contract, Survey Report, and Mitigation Monitoring Report. If the Planning Division confirms that the required surveys and relocation measures were not implemented in compliance with the requirements of this condition, then enforcement actions may be enacted in accordance with § 8114-3 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

***MM BIO-3(g)** Western pond turtle—Within no more than 72 hours prior to any ground disturbance within areas containing suitable habitat for western pond turtle, the Permittee shall retain a County-approved biologist to conduct a pre-construction survey for western pond turtle. If western pond turtle or potentially occupied burrows are identified within the planned disturbance area, the Permittee shall consult with and obtain approval from CDFW for relocation of the individuals to a suitable location approved by CDFW. If aestivating western pond turtles are found on-site, the Permittee's qualified biologist shall prepare a western pond turtle habitat replacement program for review and approval by CDFW and the Planning Division. Such program shall incorporate details of replacement aestivation burrows, relocation of aestivating individuals to new burrows, and monitoring of habitat replacement success. All surveys, CDFW coordination and approvals, and actions taken to implement this measure shall be documented in a report prepared by the Permittee's qualified biologist and the report shall be submitted to the Planning Division.*

The Permittee shall provide to the Planning Division a Survey Report from a County-approved biologist that provides the results of the western pond turtle surveys and a plan for avoidance or relocation in accordance with the requirements approved by CDFW. Along with the Survey Report, the Permittee shall provide a copy of a signed contract with the County-approved biologist who will monitor avoidance efforts during land clearing activities. Following the completion of land clearing activities, the Permittee shall submit to the Planning Division a Mitigation Monitoring Report from a County-approved biologist that documents the actions the County-approved biologist implemented to avoid impacts to western pond turtle.

The County-approved biologist shall conduct the survey within no more than 72 hours prior to the initiation of land clearing activities. The Permittee shall submit the Survey Report and signed contract to the Planning Division, prior to issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction. The Mitigation Monitoring Report shall be submitted within 14 days of completion of the land clearing activities.

The Planning Division reviews for adequacy, and maintains in the Project file, the signed contract, Survey Report, and Mitigation Monitoring Report. If the Planning Division confirms that the required surveys and relocation measures were not implemented in compliance with the requirements of this condition, then enforcement actions may be enacted in accordance with § 8114-3 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

MM BIO-3(h) *Crotch bumble bee— Prior to vegetation removal or other ground disturbing activities in new areas on the Project site, the Permittee shall conduct pre-disturbance surveys for Crotch bumble bee and shall prepare Crotch bumble bee habitat mitigation and monitoring plan for review and approval by the Planning Division. No disturbance of California sagebrush scrub within the Project site shall occur until written approval of the mitigation and monitoring plan is provided by the Planning Division and any pre-disturbance mitigation elements of the plan are implemented. The mitigation and monitoring plan shall be prepared by a County-approved biologist and shall provide measures deemed sufficient to avoid significant effects on Crotch bumble bee.*

MM BIO-3(i) *Santa Monica grasshopper— Prior to vegetation removal or other ground disturbing activities in new areas on the Project site, the Permittee shall conduct pre-disturbance surveys for Santa Monica grasshopper and shall prepare Santa Monica grasshopper mitigation and monitoring plan for review and approval by the Planning Division. No disturbance of laurel sumac scrub, Mountain mahogany scrub, or chamise/ceanothus chaparral communities within the Project site shall occur until written approval of the mitigation and monitoring plan is provided by the Planning Division and any pre-disturbance mitigation elements of the plan are implemented. The mitigation and monitoring plan shall be prepared by a County-approved biologist and shall provide measures deemed sufficient to avoid significant effects on Santa Monica grasshopper.*

MM BIO-3(j) Mountain lion:

MM BIO-3(j)(1) *—Implement MM BIO-6.*

MM BIO-3(j)(2) *—To avoid take or other adverse effects to mountain lion that may be present within the mine expansion area, the Permittee shall retain a County-approved biologist to conduct mountain lion surveys prior to any new vegetation clearing or ground disturbance including drilling and blasting and to provide direction for such activities as deemed appropriate by the biologist to avoid take or other adverse effects to mountain lion.*

Impact BIO-4: Ground disturbance associated with mining and reclamation within mine expansion areas could directly and indirectly impact wetlands and waters of the U.S. and/or waters of the State. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

As discussed in Section 3.5.1.7, above, multiple ephemeral drainages exist within Project site that flow into onsite detention basins or the pond located west the site. A total of 24 water features (recognized as W1-W24 in the ISBA) were identified within the Project site and survey area in 2016 (BRC, 2017) as shown on Figure 3.5-3, "Waters and Wetlands" and as listed above in Table 3.5-5. A formal wetlands delineation has not been conducted to define the specific physical and jurisdictional attributes of drainages and other waters and wetland features at the site. However, site surveys and data collection provide information regarding the locations and size (i.e., length of ephemeral drainages and area of the one detention pond in the study area) of features within and adjacent to the site sufficient to inform the impact analysis in this EIR. Until such time as a formal delineation of jurisdictional waters is

prepared and all required reviews and approvals are obtained from regulatory agencies, all such features are considered to have the potential to be waters of the U.S. and/or waters of the State.

Direct impacts to jurisdictional waters that would, or could, result from the Project include elimination or alternation of drainages as a result of ground disturbance, flow alteration as a result of mining or other ground disturbances that are up-gradient of drainages, and changes (increases or decreases) in sediment deposition rates due to flow alternations or up-gradient ground disturbance, all of which could also remove or adversely affect plant species and habitats associated with the water/drainage features. Potential indirect impacts include the introduction of contaminants or sediment from spills and/or erosion. The proposed mine plan would result in direct impacts (elimination) of drainages within the mine disturbance area. Direct and indirect impacts to drainages and other potential waters and wetland features are considered significant for the purposes of this EIR. Mitigation measure MM BIO-4 requires the preparation of a formal delineation report of jurisdiction waters on the Project site, consultation with regulatory agencies, implementation of impact avoidance and minimization measures, and habitat creation, restoration, or conservation to compensate for direct and indirect impacts to jurisdictional waters. Implementation of MM BIO-4 would reduce direct and indirect impacts to jurisdictional waters to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact BIO-4:

MM BIO-4: *Prior to vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities in mine expansion areas, or activities that would result in the discharge of fill or dredged material within a potentially jurisdictional watercourse, the Permittee shall retain a qualified wetland scientist to conduct a formal delineation of federal and state jurisdictional waters that may be present within the Project site and shall obtain all required state and federal regulatory agency approvals as may be required for planned site activities associated with such state and/or federal jurisdictional waters. The Permittee shall provide evidence of agency consultation, non-jurisdictional determinations, and approvals and copies of all authorizations, including required conditions of approval for such authorizations, to the Planning Division prior to the initiation of disturbance in mine expansion areas. The Permittee shall implement and provide written documentation verifying implementation of all required regulatory agency conditions. The qualified wetlands biologist shall identify the presence of any areas of "significant wetland habitat" and the Permittee shall provide for a minimum buffer of 100 feet between significant wetland habitat and Project disturbance areas.*

Notwithstanding regulatory approvals and implementation of conditions associated with those approvals, the Permittee shall prepare a compensatory mitigation plan addressing temporary and permanent impacts to federal and/or state jurisdictional wetlands and waters prior to disturbance. The plan shall be developed in consultation with the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW during the permitting process. It shall include a plan view graphic showing the target mitigation activities, a seeding and planting plan (species palette and application techniques), and a monitoring and reporting plan with performance standards and success criteria. The plan shall include a recommended timeline for mitigation activities and the establishment of seeded native species. The mitigation work shall begin in the same construction season as the initiation of grading within wetlands or aquatic habitats, and mitigation site grading shall be completed within one-year of initiation (or as otherwise determined by resource agency permits). All established/enhanced habitats shall be protected in perpetuity, subject to regular maintenance activities, if necessary, and appropriate to permitting agencies. Alternately, compensatory mitigation can be achieved through purchasing credits at a USACE- or CDFW-approved mitigation bank.

Impact BIO-5: Vegetation clearing in mine expansion areas would result in the direct removal of Ventura County Protected Trees. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

As discussed in Section 3.5.1.8, trees that are protected in accordance with the Ventura County Tree Protection Ordinance are present within the Project site. Table 3.5-8, "Impacts to Protected Trees within Study Area," provides a list of the trees or tree clusters that have been inventoried within the study area and identifies the trees and tree clusters that would be impacted by the Project. Impacts would occur as a result of direct removal associated with vegetation clearing in mine expansion areas. Three heritage-size coast live oak trees and fifteen southern California black walnut trees are located within mine expansion areas. These trees would be removed as a result of vegetation clearing in advance of mining in these areas. Other protected trees within the study area but outside of the proposed mine expansion area are sufficiently separated from disturbance areas such that no indirect impacts are anticipated to these other trees. For the purposes of this evaluation, the removal of the three heritage-size coast live oak trees and fifteen southern California black walnut trees is considered a significant impact. Mitigation measure MM BIO-5 requires a formal tree survey prior to any new vegetation disturbance on the site and that the Operator obtain a tree removal permit and provide for replacement of trees in permanently preserved areas. Implementation of MM BIO-6 would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Table 3.5-8. Impacts to Protected Trees within Study Area

ID #	Species Common Name and Characteristic	Girth (Circumference)	Project Impact
T1	Southern California black walnut (Multi-stem)	10 stems each 1.5″	Tree is located within proposed mine expansion area and would be removed in preparation for mining.
T2	Southern California black walnut (Sapling)	13 saplings <1″	Tree is located within proposed mine expansion area and would be removed in preparation for mining.
T3	Coast live oak (Multitrunk)	39″, 44″, 20″ (Heritage)	Tree is located within proposed mine expansion area and would be removed in preparation for mining.
T4	Coast live oak	115.5″ (Heritage)	Tree is located within proposed mine expansion area and would be removed in preparation for mining.
T5	Coast live oak (Multitrunk)	14″, 15.5″,8.5″,9.5″ ,8.5″, 7.5″,8.5″, 14.5″ (Heritage)	Tree is located within proposed mine expansion area and would be removed in preparation for mining.
T6	Southern California black walnut (Multi-stem)	7 stems each 1.5″	Tree is located within proposed mine expansion area and would be removed in preparation for mining.
T7	Coast live oak (Multitrunk)	6″, 5″, 3.5″	Not impacted. Tree is located outside of proposed mine disturbance area.
T8	Coast live oak	87.5″	Not impacted. Tree is located outside of proposed mine disturbance area.
T9	Coast live oak	82″	Not impacted. Tree is located outside of proposed mine disturbance area.

ID #	Species Common Name and Characteristic	Girth (Circumference)	Project Impact
T10	Coast live oak	80″	Not impacted. Tree is located outside of proposed mine disturbance area.
T11	Coast live oak (multi-trunk)	27″ and 51″	Not impacted. Tree is located outside of proposed mine disturbance area.
T12	Coast live oak (multi-trunk)	32″, 47″, and 37″	Not impacted. Tree is located outside of proposed mine disturbance area.
T13	Coast live oak (multi-trunk)	10″ and 7″	Not impacted. Tree is located outside of proposed mine disturbance area.
T14	Coast live oak (multi-trunk)	8″, 9″, 13″, and 4″	Not impacted. Tree is located outside of proposed mine disturbance area.
T15	Coast live oak	Estimated 60″	Not impacted. Tree is located outside of proposed mine disturbance area.
T16	Coast live oak	Estimated 60″	Not impacted. Tree is located outside of proposed mine disturbance area.

Mitigation for Impact BIO-6

MM BIO-5: *The Permittee shall comply with the County's Tree Protection Regulations (TPR) set forth in § 8107-25 et seq. of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance and the Tree Protection Guidelines (TPG), through implementation of measures as specified herein.*

The Permittee shall avoid impacting protected trees to the extent feasible, and shall offset or mitigate any damage to protected trees or associated impacts from such damage. If protected trees are felled/damaged and require offsets/mitigation pursuant to the TPR (§ 8107-25.10) and TPG (§ IV.C, Offset/Replacement Guidelines), the Permittee shall post a financial assurance to cover the costs of planting and maintaining the offset trees.

The Permittee shall prepare and submit to the Planning Division for review and approval, a TPP pursuant to the "Content Requirement for Tree Protection Plans" that is currently available on-line at: http://www.ventura.org/rma/planning/pdf/permits/tree/Tree-Protection-Plan-11-11-19.pdf. The TPP must include (but is not limited to):

a. *measures to protect all TPR-protected trees whose tree protection zones (TPZs) are within [50 feet / less than 50 feet is acceptable with appropriate sign-off from a qualified arborist] of the construction envelope (including stockpile and storage areas, access roads, and all areas to be used for construction activities) or within 10 feet of other trees proposed for felling or removal;*
b. *the offset or mitigation that will be provided for any trees approved for felling; and*
c. *the offset or mitigation that will be provided should any protected trees be damaged unexpectedly.*

A qualified arborist shall prepare the TPP in conformance with the County's TPR, TPG, and "Content Requirements for Tree Protection Plans."

If in-lieu fees will be paid to a conservation agency for tree offsets/mitigation, the Permittee shall submit to the Planning Division for review and approval, a tree mitigation plan from a conservation agency that explains how the mitigation funds will be used to support the preservation of protected trees. After the Planning Division's review and approval of the tree mitigation plan, the Permittee shall provide the Planning Division with a copy of the contract between the conservation agency and the Permittee.

If a financial assurance is required for tree offsets/mitigation, the Planning Division shall provide the Permittee with a "Financial Assurance Acknowledgement" form. The Permittee shall submit the required financial assurance and the completed "Financial Assurance Acknowledgement" form to the Planning Division. The Permittee shall submit annual verification that any non-cash financial assurances are current and have not expired.

Prior to the issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction, the Permittee shall submit the TPP to the Planning Division for review and approval, implement all prior-to-construction tree protection measures, and submit the required documentation to demonstrate that the Permittee implemented the tree protection measures. Unless otherwise approved by the Planning Director, replacement and transplant trees must be planted prior to [occupancy or use (select one)]. Other monitoring and reporting dates shall be as indicated in the approved TPP.

If in lieu fees are required and will be paid to the Planning Division's Tree Impact Fund, the Permittee shall submit these fees prior to the issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction. Where a TPP damaged tree addendum is prepared, the Permittee shall remit payment of the fees within 30 days of Planning Division's approval of the addendum.

If in lieu fees are required and will be paid to an approved conservation agency, the Permittee shall submit these fees, along with the required tree mitigation plan and contract from the conservation organization, prior to the issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction.

If a financial assurance is required, the Permittee shall submit the required financial assurance and the completed "Financial Assurance Acknowledgement" form prior to the issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction/within 30 days of the Planning Division's approval of the TPP damaged tree addendum [select appropriate]. The Planning Division may release the financial assurance after receiving the report from the project arborist that verifies that the replacement trees met their final 5 or 7 year performance targets set forth in the TPP.

The Permittee shall retain an arborist to monitor and prepare the documentation regarding the health of the protected trees, pursuant to the monitoring and reporting requirements set forth in the "Content Requirements for Tree Protection Plans." The Planning Division maintains the approved TPP and all supporting documentation in the Project file. The Resource Management Agency Operations Division maintains copies of all financial documentation. Planning Division staff, Building and Safety Inspectors, and Public Works Agency grading inspectors have the authority to inspect the site during the construction phase of the Project, in order to verify that tree protection measures remain in place during construction activities, consistent with the requirements of § 8114-3 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

Impact BIO-6: Project implementation would directly and indirectly affect wildlife movement opportunities the Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Connection. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

As discussed in Section 3.5.1.4 and illustrated on Figures 3.5-2 and 3.5-3, the portion of the Santa Monica – Sierra Madre Connection adjacent to the Project site is approximately 1,500 feet-wide between the mine disturbance area of the existing quarry and the residential development to the southeast. Although the entirety of the existing and proposed CUP areas are designed by the County as habitat connectivity and wildlife corridor area (as discussed in Sections 3.5.1.4, the 1,500-foot wide area between the existing mining area and residences is considered to provide the primary habitat and

movement opportunity between areas to the south and north. While wildlife movement may occasionally occur within the existing disturbed areas of the Project site, the limited vegetation and the presence of surface mining and processing operations are expected to minimize the movement value of the existing disturbance areas. Mining in the proposed expansion areas east of the existing mining area would narrow the Connection at this location to approximately 800 feet. Mining in other portions of the proposed expansion area would also reduce habitat quality in areas designated as habitat connectivity and wildlife corridor areas.

The Project's reduction in available habitat for wildlife Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Connection is not expected to significantly affect wildlife movement through the area as compared to baseline conditions, since mining operations would be generally consistent with existing operations. However, for the purposes of this evaluation, the impact to wildlife movement is considered potentially significant as a result of the reduction in habitat within the County-designated movement corridor; onsite activities that would continue and could occur in expansion areas including potential use of lighting, fence installation, and equipment operation; and the narrowing of the corridor between the site and residential development to the east. As discussed in Section 3.5.1.9, under the heading "Ventura County Regulations for Development in Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors," County zoning code sections 8104-7.7 and 8109-4.8 contain specific requirements associated with development and activities within wildlife corridor areas. Compliance with the code requirements would substantially reduce the potential for significant impacts associated with wildlife movement. Mitigation Measure MM BIO-6 requires the Applicant to develop and submit a wildlife movement mitigation plan containing specific provisions for minimizing potential effects on wildlife movement adjacent to planned mining areas and for compliance with County zoning code Section 8104-7.7. Implementation of MM BIO-6, in combination with other mitigation measures identified in this section that would avoid or minimize potential impacts to habitat and special-status wildlife species, would reduce potential Project impacts to wildlife movement corridors and is considered sufficient to reduce Impact BIO-6 to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact BIO-6:

MM BIO-6(a): *The Permittee shall minimize potentially significant environmental impacts from light and glare to wildlife migration corridors and/or wildlife habitat Wildlife Corridor or Wildlife Habitat, as specified herein.*

> *All outdoor lighting must be located within 100 feet of a structure or adjacent to a driveway, and shall be hooded to direct light downward onto buildings, structures, driveways, or yards, in order to prevent the illumination of surrounding habitat. Floodlights are prohibited. All glass and other materials used on building exteriors and structures must be selected to minimize reflective glare. In order to minimize light and glare from emanating from the Project site, all light fixtures located on the exterior of structures, as well as all freestanding light standards, must be high cut-off type that divert lighting downward onto the property to avoid the casting of any direct light onto the adjacent habitat.*
>
> *For any changes proposed to facility lighting existing at the time of Project approval, The Permittee shall submit two copies of a lighting plan to the Planning Division for review and approval. The Permittee shall include a photometric plan and manufacturer's specifications for each exterior light fixture type (e.g., light standards, bollards, and wall mounted packs) in the lighting plan. An electrical engineer registered by the State of California shall prepare the lighting plan. The lighting plan must include illumination information within parking areas, pathways, streetscapes, and open spaces proposed*

throughout the development. The Permittee shall install all exterior lighting in accordance with the approved lighting plan.

The Permittee shall submit the lighting plan to the Planning Division for review and approval, prior to the issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction. The Permittee shall maintain the lighting pursuant to the lighting plan for the life of the Project.

The Planning Division maintains a stamped copy of the approved lighting plan in the Project file. The Permittee shall ensure that the lighting is installed according to the approved lighting plan prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. The Building and Safety Inspector and Planning Division staff have the authority to ensure that the lighting plan is installed according to the approved lighting plan. The Planning Division has the authority to conduct site inspections to ensure ongoing compliance with this condition consistent with the requirements of § 8114-3 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

MM BIO-6(b): *The Permittee shall mitigate potentially significant environmental impacts to wildlife migration corridors from fencing, as specified herein.*

The Permittee shall ensure that all new fences or walls, except for those within 100 feet of structures and retaining walls, are permeable to wildlife, and conform to the following standards:

- *A split-rail, pole, or wire fences must be constructed such that:*
  - *The top rail or wire is no more than 40 inches above the ground;*
  - *The top two rails or wires are at least 12 inches apart;*
  - *The bottom wire or rail is at least 18 inches above the ground;*
  - *Both the top and bottom wires or rails are smooth (no barbed wire on the top or bottom wires);*
  - *There are no vertical stays; and*
  - *The posts are located a minimum of 10 feet apart.*
- *Fencing for grazing shall be limited to moveable one or two-strand electric fencing.*

The Permittee shall submit plans to the Planning Division for review and approval, which identify all fences to be constructed on the Project site. These plans must identify the fence locations and include schematic elevations detailing the design of, and materials to be used in, the fencing.

The Permittee shall submit the plans to the Planning Division for review and approval, prior to the issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction. The Permittee shall install the approved fencing, prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for [identify building or structure].

The Permittee shall submit the plans to the Planning Division for review and approval prior to the issuance of a Zoning Clearance for construction. The Planning Division has the authority to conduct site inspections to ensure that the Permittee installs and maintains the fencing in compliance with this condition, consistent with the requirements of § 8114-3 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

MM BIO-6(c): *The Permittee shall mitigate the Project's potentially significant environmental impacts to wildlife migration corridors through establishment and maintenance a wildlife passage (WP), as specified herein.*

A WP shall be provided to the east of the Project mine area and shall be a minimum of 800 feet in width between the Project disturbance area and the nearest developed residential property. In these areas, all development (e.g., construction, placement, or erection of any solid material or structure, grading, paving, vegetation removal, installation of fencing or walls, and removing, dredging, or disposal of any materials) is prohibited and only restoration of native plants as a component of reclamation shall be permitted within the WP area. Outdoor lighting on the Project site shall not illuminate the WP area.

The Permittee shall prepare a map of the WP areas for the Planning Division's review and approval. The WP areas shall be described in metes and bounds, and shown on the map. The WP areas must be depicted on all site plans for future development on the subject property, which are submitted to the County for review and approval. The Permittee shall record the Planning Division-approved map and these conditions of approval with the deed to the subject property. Applicants shall depict the WP areas on all site plans for future development on the subject property.

Prior to vegetation clearing or ground disturbance within Project mine expansion areas, the Permittee shall provide the map to the Planning Division for review and approval. Prior to Prior to vegetation clearing or ground disturbance within Project mine expansion areas, the Permittee shall record the Planning Division-approved map and these conditions of approval.

The Permittee shall submit the map to the Planning Division for review and approval prior to prior to vegetation clearing or ground disturbance within Project mine expansion areas. The Planning Division maintains a stamped copy of the map in the Project file. The Planning Division will review site plans for future development on the subject property, in order to ensure that the proposed development complies with the requirements of this condition. The Planning Division has the authority to conduct site inspections to ensure that the Permittee maintains the WP in compliance with this condition, consistent with the requirements of § 8114-3 of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance.

3.5.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

In consideration of the projects discussed in Section 3.1.5 of the EIR, two projects are identified as relevant to cumulative impacts associated with biological resources.

PL-17-0135 consists of a Minor Modification to CUP Case No. LU11-0124 to authorize the continued use of Gerry Ranch for "Agricultural Promotional Uses" and "Festivals, Animal Shows, and Similar Events, Temporary Outdoor;" for a 10-year period, as well as modification to the permitted hours of operation for the agricultural promotional use (called "U-Pick Blueberries") to occur from December 1st through end of June, Monday through Sunday, 8:00 am to sunset during these months. No physical changes are proposed as part of this time extension request.

PL-17-0062 - consists of a Conditional Use Permit to allow "Festivals, Animal Shows and Similar Events, Temporary Outdoor," specifically temporary, outdoor events at a 2.86-acre property within the Open Space (160-ac. min) Zone and the Open Space General Plan land use designation addressed as 1735 Pancho Road.

These two projects are anticipated to have minimal effects on biological resource and the proposed Project would not present a cumulative impact into sensitive biological resources, including special-status species, wetland resources, and wildlife movement, when considering these two recently approved projects. Thus, the Project would not have a cumulatively considerable impact on biological resources and the Project's cumulative impact is considered less than significant.

3.5.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies associated with biological resources is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

SECTION 3.6 – CULTURAL RESOURCES

SECTION 3.6–CULTURAL RESOURCES

This section provides an evaluation of potential impacts of the Project on cultural resources, including tribal cultural resources. Supporting documentation used in preparing this section include "Cultural Resources Survey and Assessment for the Pacific Rock Quarry Project" (Cogstone, 2010) and "Supplemental Cultural Resources Assessment for the Pacific Rock Quarry Project" (Cogstone, 2017) submitted by the Applicant, and a May 29, 2020 memorandum, "Cultural Resources Studies Review for the Pacific Rock Quarry Expansion Project" (ESA, 2020) prepared in support of this EIR. These documents contain site records or other cultural resources information that is considered confidential and these documents are therefore not included as appendices to this EIR. Relevant information from these documents is summarized in this section to summarize their content and information used to support the impact analysis and conclusions for this EIR.

3.6.1 Setting

This section summarizes the prehistoric, ethnographic, and historic setting of the region in which the Project is located.

3.6.1.1 Prehistory

Early Period (c. 8,000 – c. 3,350 B.P.)

Reliable evidence of Holocene (post-10,000 years ago) settlement in Ventura County begins circa 8,000 Before Present (B.P.). The earliest sites were located on terraces and mesas; however, settlement gradually shifted to the coast (Wlodarski, 1988; Glassow and Wilcoxon, 1988). Site assemblages dating to this period often contained large amounts of milling stones and manos, crude choppers, and core tools (W&S Consultants, 1997). Prehistoric peoples used these tools to harvest terrestrial and sea mammals, shellfish, and fish. Mortars and pestles appear toward the end of the period, suggesting a shift towards a greater reliance on acorns (Glassow et al., 1985).

Middle Period (c. 3,350 – c. 800 B.P.)

Archaeological material dating to the Middle Period represents a significant evolution in hunter-gatherer technology. The presence of chipped stone tools increases and diversifies, projectile points became more common, and fish hooks and plank canoes (*tomol*) appear (W&S Consultants, 1997). Burials dating to this period provide evidence of wealth and social stratification indicating a transition to ranked society (Ventura County RMA, 1988). Excavation data from the Santa Monica Mountains demonstrate expansion to the inland region allowing trade and ceremonial exchange patterns to develop (Ventura County RMA, 2011; Ventura County RMA, 2005).

Late Period (c. 800 – c. 150 B.P.)

The cultural complexity initiated during the Middle Period intensified in the Late Period. This period is also referred to as the Chumash Era as Chumash social and religious development peaked during this time (Arnold, 1987). Villages became the main population centers with satellite camps geared toward the seasonal harvest of plants, seeds, game, and material resources. The Chumash became expert craftsman of baskets, stone vessels, shell beads, tomol, and fishing technology (Moratto, 1984). It is also likely that communication and trade with non-Chumash tribes and villages accelerated during this period (Ventura County RMA, 2011).

3.6.1.2 Ethnography

The Project site is located within the ethnographic territory of the Chumash, who inhabited the Coast Ranges between San Simeon and Malibu (Kroeber, 1925). The Chumash have been divided into several geographic groups, each associated with a distinct language dialect (Hoover, 1986). The Chumash living in Ventura County formed the *Ventureño* dialect group of the Chumash language family (Golla, 2007). This group was named for their association with the Spanish Mission San Buenaventura, founded in 1782.

The Chumash political organization comprised a named village and the surrounding resource areas governed by a chief, known as the Wot (Sampson, 2013). Some higher status chiefs controlled large chiefdoms containing several villages. It is likely the Project site was included in the chiefdom Lulapin, whose limits extended from Malibu to just beyond modern Santa Barbara. The village Muwu, at modern Point Mugu was the main headquarters for this chiefdom (Whitley and Clewlow, 1979; Whitley and Beaudry, 1991). Other villages included Humaliwo located on a high point near Malibu Lagoon and Ta'lopop, located a few miles up Malibu Canyon from the lagoon. According to ethnographic studies, inhabitants from different villages bonded through trade, joint ceremonies, and intermarriage (Sampson, 2013).

The chiefly offices were normally inherited through the male line with a primogeniture rule, i.e., the custom of the firstborn inheriting the office, in effect (Hoover, 1986). Chiefs had several bureaucratic assistants to help in political affairs and serve as messengers, orators, and ceremonial assistants. Several status positions were associated with specialized knowledge and rituals such as weather prophet, ritual poisoner, herbalist, etc. (Bean, 1974).

The Chumash were a non-agrarian culture and relied on hunting and gathering for their sustenance. Archaeological evidence indicates that the Chumash exploited marine food resources from the earliest occupation of the coast at least 9,000 years ago (Greenwood, 1978).

Much of their subsistence was derived from pelagic fish, particularly during the late summer and early fall. Shellfish were also exploited, including mussel and abalone from rocky shores and cockle and clams from sandy beaches. Acorns were a food staple; they were ground into flour using stone mortars and pestles and then leached to remove tannic acid. In addition, a wide variety of seeds, including chia from various species of sage, was utilized. The Chumash harvested many plants for their roots, tubers, or greens (Hoover, 1986).

In this area, as elsewhere in California, basketry served many of the functions that pottery did in other places. The Chumash used baskets for cooking, serving, storage, and transporting burdens. Some basket makers wove baskets so tightly that they could hold water while others waterproofed their baskets by lining them with pitch or asphaltum (Chartkoff and Chartkoff, 1984).

The coastal Chumash practiced a regular seasonal period of population dispersal and aggregation in response to the location and seasonal availability of different food resources. In this way, large coastal villages would have been fully populated only in the late summer when pelagic fishing was at its peak. Through winter, the Chumash depended largely on stored food resources. During the spring and summer, the population dispersed through inland valleys to harvest wild plant resources (Landberg, 1965).

The Chumash lived in large, hemispherical houses constructed by placing willow limbs or other poles in a circle and bending and tying them together at the top. These structures were then covered with tule mats or thatch. Structures such as this housed 40 to 50 individuals of several three- or four-member family groups. Dance houses and sweathouses are also reported for the Chumash (Kroeber, 1925). Archaeological

evidence supports observations that twin or split villages existed on opposite sides of streams or other natural features, possibly reflecting the moiety system of native California (Greenwood, 1978).

Spanish colonization and the establishment of Mission San Buenaventura ended Chumash culture in Ventura County. Chartkoff and Chartkoff (1984) note that Spanish settlement barred many Native Americans from traditionally important resources including clamshell beads, abalone shells, Catalina steatite, shellfish, and asphaltum. The introduction of European customs and diseases transformed the hunter-gatherers into agricultural laborers and decimated the native population.

3.6.1.3 History

Contact Period (A.D. 1542 – 1782)

Juan Cabrillo, while exploring the California coast, became the first European to travel near the Project site when he anchored near Point Mugu in October 1542. Over two hundred years later, Gaspar de Portolá led the first Spanish land expedition in August 1769 traveling down the Santa Clara River and camping near the future location of Mission San Buenaventura (Bolton, 1926; Browning, 1992; Priestley, 1937). Several accounts of this expedition exist, including those of Juan Crespi (Bolton 1926), Miguel Costansó (Browning, 1992), and Pedro Fages (Priestley, 1937). Costansó's diary contains observations regarding the native inhabitants' houses, settlement patterns, dress, and customs, as well as their attitudes toward the expedition (Browning, 1992). Fages noted the general Chumash population was distributed in small, numerous villages (Priestley, 1937).

In 1776, Juan Bautista de Anza traveled through Ventura County as leader of the San Francisco colonists, stopping near the outlet of the Santa Clara River. This route, known today as the Juan Bautista De Anza National Historic Trail, runs from near Nogales, Arizona to San Francisco, California, and crosses through Ventura County (CATE, 2000).

Mission Period (A.D. 1782 – 1834)

Junípero Serra founded Mission San Buenaventura in 1782. Newly baptized Chumash provided almost all the labor to construct and maintain the mission, which included the seven-mile-long aqueduct system that carried water from the Ventura River. The aqueduct allowed the mission to maintain large orchards and gardens, which produced surplus food for trade. Most of the missions were similar in design and consisted of a church and living quarters for the priests, soldiers, and baptized Chumash. By the early nineteenth century, the surrounding Chumash villages were barely inhabited (Triem, 1985).

Rancho Period (A.D. 1822 – 1845)

In 1821, Mexico declared independence from Spain; a year later, California became a Mexican Territory. After the secularization of the missions in 1834, lands were gradually transferred to private ownership via a system of land grants (Hoover 1990). Specifically, the Project site is within the Rancho Calleguas land grant, a 9,998-acre parcel granted to José Pedro Ruiz by Governor Juan Alvarado in 1837.

Anglo-Mexican Period (A.D. 1845 – 1860)

Following the Bear Flag Revolt in 1846, John C. Frémont and the California Battalion marched into San Buenaventura, finding all the inhabitants had fled except the Chumash neophytes. The Treaty of Hidalgo formally transferred California to the United States in 1848. At the time, the area that would become Ventura County was originally the southern portion of Santa Barbara County (Murphy, 1979).

Across California, courts reviewed the legality of each land grant on an individual basis. While the Treaty of Hidalgo promised all property belonging to the Californios would be respected, the Land Act of 1851 required all land grant owners to prove their title and ownerships rights. Because the Californios relied on vague surveys and land titles, it took an average of 17 years to receive their American land patents (Bean, 1968). The Rancho El Rio de Santa Clara ola Colonia was no exception, as a claim was filed in 1852, but the land was not patented to the soldiers until 1872.

Americanization Period (A.D. 1860 – Present)

During the early American Period, the ranchos continued to raise cattle and sheep, but a severe drought from 1862 to 1864 caused financial difficulties for many of the ranchos. Several ranchos were divided and sold to east coast capitalists hoping to encounter petroleum deposits (Murphy, 1979). In the 1860s, Thomas Bard, an agent for Thomas Alexander Scott and the Pennsylvania and California Petroleum Company bought a five sevenths undivided share of Rancho El Rio de Santa Clara o la Colonia. Only the Gonzales family refused to sell their share to Bard and instead sold to the Camarillo family.

Ventura County was officially split from Santa Barbara County on January 1, 1873, and a dozen communities were established within the next 25 years. In 1871, artesian wells were drilled in the Oxnard Plain followed by the construction of Port Hueneme one year later. These improvements allowed the Oxnard Plain to become a major agricultural region. When the Oxnard brothers constructed a sugar beet factory in 1898, a town site west of the factory was platted to accommodate rapid growth in the region (Triem, 1985). The town of Oxnard was incorporated in 1903 and attracted people from local communities such as Hueneme and New Jerusalem. Oxnard experienced its largest growth during and after World War II as its population more than doubled between 1940 and 1950 (SBRA, 2014).

During the 1960s and 1970s, many working-class people migrated from east and central Los Angeles to southern and eastern Ventura County. As a result, there was significant population growth in Ventura County along the Highway 101 corridor. Further expansion of Highway 101 has facilitated commuting to Los Angeles and prompted further development to the west (Murphy, 1979).

3.6.1.4 Records Search Results

Two cultural resources studies related to the Project have been conducted, and a supplemental records search was also conducted. The first study, documented in the May 2010, "Cultural Resources Survey and Assessment for the Pacific Rock Quarry Project, Ventura County, California," (Cogstone, 2010) included a records search and field survey of previously undisturbed areas located within the existing CUP area and within the additional areas outside of the CUP associated with further mining and development of storage and structures that were proposed by the quarry operator at that time. The second study, documented in the February 2017, "Supplemental Cultural Resources Assessment for the Pacific Rock Quarry Project, Ventura County, California," (Cogstone, 2017) included a supplemental field survey in 2017 covering the proposed CUP expansion areas of the Project evaluated in this EIR. Together the two studies cover the full Project site, including undisturbed areas within the existing CUP and proposed CUP boundaries.

The Ventura County Resource Management Agency (RMA) received a Cultural Resources Records Search Quick Check from the South Central Coastal Information Center (SCCIC) at California State University, Fullerton on February, 17, 2010. The check was for areas within the existing CUP boundary and did not address the currently proposed expanded CUP area addressed in this EIR. The check indicated that only a portion site had been previously surveyed and no resources were found and recommended that a Phase I archaeological survey be conducted.

On April 19, 2010, Amy Glover with Cogstone conducted a records search at the SCCIC. The center is an affiliate of the State of California Office of Historic Preservation and the official state repository of archaeological and historic records for Ventura County. The records search included the existing CUP area plus a 1-mile radius (Cogstone, 2010). The 1-mile radius included in the 2010 records search encompasses the current Project site (i.e., the existing CUP area and the proposed CUP area). The 2010 records search included a review of documentation for all known historic-period and prehistoric archaeological sites as well as a review of previously conducted cultural resources surveys and technical reports. The State Historic Property Data Files, National Register of Historic Places, National Register of Determined Eligible Properties, California Points of Historic Interest, and California Office of Historic Preservation Archaeological Determinations of Eligibility were also reviewed as part of the 2010 records review. (Cogstone, 2017)

In preparing this EIR, an updated records search was conducted on September 12, 2019 by ESA (2020) at the SCCIC housed at California State University, Fullerton. The records search included a review of all recorded archaeological resources, historic architectural resources, and previous studies within 1 mile of the Project site. The updated records search results indicate that 31 cultural resources studies have been conducted within 1 mile of the Project site. Of these 31 studies, five have included at least part of the Project site (ESA, 2020) The records search results indicate that 13 cultural resources have been previously recorded within a 1-mile radius of the Project site, as summarized in Table 3.6-1, "Previously Documented Cultural Resources within 1 Mile of the Project Site." Two of the resources are historic-period sites (P-56-001300 and P-56-001306), two resources are prehistoric isolates (P-56-100219 and P-56-100220), and nine resources are prehistoric archaeological sites (P-56-000182, -000552, -000553, -000983, -000984, -000985, -000986, -000987, and -001012). Of the 13 resources, two (P-56-000182 and P-56-001306) are located within the Project site. These are same resources identified by Cogstone (2010, 2017).

Table 3.6-1. Previously Documented Cultural Resources within 1 Mile of the Project Site

Primary # (P-56-)	Permanent Trinomial (CA-Ven-)	Other Identifier	Description	Date Recorded/	Primary # (P-56-)	Permanent Trinomial (CA-Ven-)
000182*	000182	Calleguas Ranch Site	Prehistoric archaeological site consisting of groundstone and lithic scatter.	1967/2010	Not evaluated	Within
000552	000552	-	Prehistoric archaeological site consisting of a lithic scatter.	1978/1989	Not evaluated	0.60 miles
000553	000553	-	Prehistoric archaeological site consisting of a lithic scatter.	1978/1989	Not evaluated	0.65 miles
000983	000983	Knoll Site	Prehistoric archaeological site consisting of groundstone and lithic scatter.	1989	Not evaluated	0.70 miles
000984	000984	Ande-site	Prehistoric archaeological site consisting of a lithic scatter.	1989	Not evaluated	0.50 miles
000985	000985	Rock Shelter #1	Prehistoric archaeological site consisting of a rock shelter containing shell and lithics.	1989	Not evaluated	0.70 miles
000986	000986	Rock Shelter #2	Prehistoric archaeological site consisting of a large rock shelter containing burnt bone and lithics.	1989	Not evaluated	0.45 miles
000987	000987	Rock Shelter #3	Prehistoric archaeological site consisting of two rock shelters and a possible third containing shell, burnt bone and lithics.	1989	Not evaluated	0.95 miles
001012	001012	W&S 102	Prehistoric archaeological site consisting of a rock shelter, 2 shell middens, and groundstone and lithic scatter.	1990	Not evaluated	0.50 miles

Primary # (P-56-)	Permanent Trinomial (CA-Ven-)	Other Identifier	Description	Date Recorded/	Primary # (P-56-)	Permanent Trinomial (CA-Ven-)
001300	001300H	Howard Road Ranch Buildings	Historic-era built resources consisting of 2 early 1900s structures (residence and detached garage).	2009	Appears Eligible for CRHR	0.95 miles
001306*		Pacific Rock Quarry Bunker	Historic-era built resource consisting of the Pacific Rock/Holly Quarry Bunker.	2010	Not eligible for CRHR	Within
100219		Isolate #1	Prehistoric isolate consisting of an Andesite hammerstone and scraper.	1989	Not evaluated	0.45 miles
100220		Isolate #2	Prehistoric isolate consisting of a Pink Quartzite, bifacially ground mano.	1989	Not evaluated	0.60 miles

Source: ESA, 2020.

P-56-000182

Resource P-56-000182 (CA-VEN-182) was originally recorded in 1967 as consisting of a sparse scatter of artifacts distributed across broad area of an agricultural basin. Collected artifacts included mortars, pestles, and core tools. While artifacts were collected from the surface, it is not clear if the entire site was surface collected.

3.6.1.5 Survey Results

Pedestrian field surveys were conducted in 2010 and 2017 (Cogstone 2010, 2017). The surveys covered all portions of the Project site with the exception of areas previously impacted by quarrying and areas with terrain too steep to access. One newly documented resource, P-56-001306, was identified as a result of the surveys. Survey results for this newly documented resource and the previously recorded prehistoric archaeological site are discussed below.

P-56-001306

Resource P-56-001306 is described as a semi-circular metal structure with a doorway in the flat face and surrounded by large boulders along the curved portion. The curved portion and top are also covered with compacted dirt. The front façade measures approximately 8 by 8 feet, and the bunker is roughly 15 feet in depth. No associated artifacts were found. The bunker is reported to have been used to store explosives during an early phase of quarry operations. The resource was documented and recommended not eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) (Cogstone 2010). The site was more recently evaluated by Shannon Lopez on August 15, 2019 (Lopez, 2019). Lopez (2019) described the structural remains of the bunker as consistent with what Caltrans describes as "Powder houses stored the mine's explosives and were usually located some distance from other structures. These were usually small windowless rooms, often semi-subterranean (commonly built into a hillside) and featured thick walls of stone, brick, or concrete." (Lopez 2019, citing "A Historical Context and Archaeological Research Design for Mining Properties in California" [Caltrans, 2008].) Lopez concluded that the "simple structure is not associated with important persons or events and does not represent a work of master craftsmanship. The data potential for archaeology is low as excavating this structure would not provide new information to history or answer important research questions." As a result, Lopez (2019) recommended that the structure is not eligible for listing on the California Register of Historical Resources.

P-56-000182

While the documented location of previously recorded prehistoric archaeological site P-56-000182 was revisited during both the 2010 and 2017 surveys, no evidence of the resource was found on the surface, even though, in 2010, the resource was located within a freshly disked agricultural field with excellent ground surface visibility. Surface artifacts were collected when the resource was originally documented in 1967, and ongoing agricultural activities have likely disturbed the resource extensively. This likely accounts for the absence of cultural materials on the ground surface. However, it is not known if subsurface artifacts are present. The resource has not been subject to test excavation and has not been evaluated for listing in the CRHR.

3.6.1.6 Regulatory Framework

Historical Resources

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) State Guidelines include procedures for identifying, analyzing, and disclosing potential adverse impacts to historical resources, which include all resources listed in or formally determined eligible for the CRHR or local registers. CEQA further defines a "historical resource" as a resource that meets any of the following criteria:

- A resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the CRHR;
- A resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in Section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code, unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant;
- A resource identified as significant (i.e., rated 1-5) in a historical resource survey meeting the requirements of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1(g) (Department of Parks and Recreation Form [DPR] 523), unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant; or
- Any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record or manuscript, which a lead agency determines to be historically significant or significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political, military or cultural annals of California, provided the determination is supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record.

Generally, a resource is considered "historically significant" if it meets the criteria for listing on the CRHR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5).

The CRHR is a listing of California resources that are significant within the context of California's history. The CRHR is a state-wide program of similar scope to the National Register Historic Places. In addition, properties designated under municipal or county ordinances are eligible for listing in the CRHR. A historic resource must be significant at the local, state, or national level under one or more of the following criteria that are defined in the California Code of Regulations Title 14, Chapter 11.5, Section 4850:

- It is associated with events or patterns of events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of local or regional history, or the cultural heritage of California or the United States; or
- It is associated with the lives of persons important to local, California, or national history; or
- It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values; or

- It has yielded, or has the potential to yield, information important to the prehistory or history of the local area, California or the nation.

Tribal Consultation

California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21080.3.1 requires that prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration, or environmental impact report for a project, the lead agency shall begin consultation with a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project if:

- The California Native American tribe requested to the lead agency, in writing, to be informed by the lead agency through formal notification of proposed projects in the geographic area that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the tribe, and
- The California Native American tribe responds, in writing, within 30 days of receipt of the formal notification, and requests the consultation.

Within 14 days of determining that an application for a project is complete or a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, the lead agency shall provide formal notification to the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice, which shall be accomplished by means of at least one written notification that includes a brief description of the proposed project and its location, the lead agency contact information, and a notification that the California Native American tribe has 30 days to request consultation pursuant to PRC Section 21080.3.1.

Ventura County General Plan

Goal COS-4 of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the "Ventura County 2040 General Plan" (Ventura County, 2020) is, "To identify, inventory, preserve and protect cultural, historical, paleontological, and archaeological resources in Ventura County, including Native American resources, for their scientific, educational, and cultural value." General Plan policies associated with cultural resources potentially applicable to the Project are identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR.

3.6.2 Impact Analysis

3.6.2.1 Significance Thresholds

The Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) indicates a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archeological resource may have a significant impact on the environment. The ISAG state the significance of an archaeological resource is materially impaired when a project:

- Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics that account for its inclusion in a local register of historical resources pursuant to Section 5020.1 (k) requirements of Section 5024.1 (g) of the Public Resources Code, unless the public agency reviewing the effects of the project establishes by a preponderance of evidence that the resource is not archaeological or culturally significant; or
- Demolishes or materially alters in an adverse manner those physical characteristics of an archaeological resource that conveys its archaeological significance and that justify its eligibility for inclusion in the CRHR as determined by a lead agency for purposes of CEQA.

Although not addressed in the ISAG, impacts associated with tribal cultural resources would be considered significant if the project would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in PRC Section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

- listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in PRC Section 5020.1(k), or
- a resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of PRC Section 5024.1, in consideration of the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.

3.6.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact CR-1: Project-related ground disturbance would have the potential to adversely affect historical and archaeological resources. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The Project would result in up to approximately 103.7 acres of additional disturbance within the proposed CUP boundary as a result of mining and related activities within areas not previously disturbed by mining. The activities and additional surface disturbance would create the potential for unearthing, damaging, and destroying historical or archaeological resources that may be present within the disturbance areas. Such damage or destruction to significant historical or archaeological resources as defined in PRC Section 15064.5 would be significant if such resources were not identified and properly recorded and treated prior to disturbance.

Based on the cultural resources studies conducted for the Project, including a records search and field surveys conducted by Cogstone (2010; 2017) and an additional record search conducted by ESA (2020), two cultural resources are known to be located within the Project site.

Resource P-56-001306 is a metal, rock, and earthen bunker previously used for the storage of explosives. The resource is within areas of proposed future mining and would be removed and destroyed as a result of the Project. However, the resource was evaluated for listing in the CRHR and was recommended not eligible for listing (Lopez, 2019). As such, it does not qualify as a historical resource and its destruction is not considered a significant impact.

The second known resource within the Project site is Resource P-56-000182, was previously identified as a prehistoric archaeological site. The previous recording of this site indicates it is within the area of the Project site that is used for ongoing agricultural cultivation and is regularly disked and disturbed as a result of agricultural activities. The resource could not be relocated during the Cogstone 2010 field survey, and the resource may have been impacted by agricultural activity. Although no surface evidence of the resource was identified by Cogstone, it is possible that subsurface component(s) of the resource are present. The resource has not been evaluated for listing in the CRHR, and if a subsurface component is present, it could qualify as a historical resource. Since the resource has not been formally evaluated or demonstrated to no longer exist, for the purposes of this evaluation it is assumed that the resource could still be present and that it could be eligible for listing in the CRHR. Thus, the potential damage or destruction of components of this resource that may be present would be considered a significant impact. However, although the resource is located within the proposed mine expansion area boundary, it is located within an existing agricultural field that is not proposed for mining,

placement of backfill, or any other Project-related activities. Thus, the Project would not have the potential to adversely affect this resource.

For the reasons discussed above, no known historical resources as defined in §15064.5 would be impacted by the Project.

As discussed, surveys of the proposed mine expansion area did not identify the presence of any surface artifacts indicating the presence of historical or archaeological resources beyond the two resources discussed above. Pedestrian surveys of some areas were not possible due to steep terrain. While there is potential for subsurface archaeological resources within the Project site, and specifically archaeological resources that could qualify as historical resources, the steep topography and the limited depth to bedrock in much of the Project site indicates that this potential is low. However, the potential would exist for Project-related ground disturbance to encounter and disturb or destroy previously unidentified surface or subsurface archaeological resources if present. If such resources were historical resources as defined in PRC Section 15064.5, their damage or destruction would be a significant impact. Mitigation measure MM CR-1 requires that, in the event of discovery of archaeological or historical artifacts, the Permittee shall cease ground disturbance and shall develop and implement appropriate measures with County approval. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-1 would provide for actions in the event of discovery of currently unknown resources, and would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact CR-1:

MM CR-1: *If any archaeological or historical artifacts are uncovered during ground disturbance or construction activities, the Permittee shall:*

1. *Cease operations and assure the preservation of the area in which the discovery was made;*
2. *Notify the Planning Director in writing, within three days of the discovery;*
3. *Obtain the services of a County-approved archaeologist who shall assess the find and provide recommendations on the proper disposition of the site in a written report format;*
4. *Obtain the Planning Director's written concurrence of the recommended disposition of the site before resuming development; and*
5. *Implement the agreed upon recommendations.*

Impact CR-2: Project-related ground disturbance would have the potential to disturb human remains. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

No human remains have been identified in the Project site as a result of the records search or surveys and no dedicated cemeteries are located with the site. Furthermore, based on the site's land use history and absence of topsoil and vegetation within or under which human remains could be present but not yet discovered, the potential for encountering human remains is considered low. Nevertheless, ground disturbance associated with the Project would create the potential for unearthing and disturbing human remains if present within disturbance areas. California Health and Safety Code §7050.5 and California Public Resources Code §5097.98 require notification of the County coroner in the event of discovery of human remains and require that the coroner contact the NAHC if the coroner determines the remains are Native American. The State CEQA Guidelines (CCR Section 15064.5[e]) require that excavation activities be stopped whenever human remains are uncovered, and that the county coroner be called in to assess the remains. If the county coroner determines that the remains are those of Native Americans, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) must be contacted within 24 hours.

At that time, the State CEQA Guidelines (CCR Section 15064.5[d]) direct the lead agency to consult with any appropriate Native Americans as identified by the NAHC in a timely manner, and direct the lead agency (or applicant), under certain circumstances, to develop an agreement with the Native Americans for the treatment and disposition of the remains. Compliance with these requirements is required as a matter of law and would ensure that any unknown human remains discovered during Project activities are adequately addressed. However, to provide a mechanism for compliance oversight, the County requires mitigation measure MM CR-2 which specifies the actions to be taken in the event of discovery of human remains. The potential impact associated with disturbance of human remains is considered potentially significant but would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of MM CR-2.

Mitigation for Impact CR-2:

MM CR-2: *If any human burial remains are encountered during ground disturbance or construction activities, the Permittee shall:*

1. *Cease operations and assure the preservation of the area in which the discovery was made;*
2. *Immediately notify the County Coroner and the Planning Director;*
3. *Obtain the services of a County-approved archaeologist and, if necessary, Native American Monitor(s), who shall assess the find and provide recommendations on the proper disposition of the site in a written report format;*
4. *Obtain the Planning Director's written concurrence of the recommended disposition of the site before resuming development on-site; and*
5. *Implement the agreed upon recommendations.*

Impact CR-3: Project-related ground disturbance and other activities would create the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource(s) if such resource(s) are present within or adjacent to the site. (No Impact)

Project ground disturbance and other activities associated with mining, aggregate production, recycling, and reclamation, would create the potential to adversely affect tribal cultural resources if present within or near the Project site. As defined in Public Resource Code §21074 a tribal cultural resources is a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:

a) listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resource Code §5020.1(k), or
b) a resource determined by the lead agency in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code §5024.1.

As part of the Cogstone 2010 assessment, a Sacred Lands File search was requested from the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on April 16, 2010 and on April 23, 2010, the NAHC replied that the record search failed to indicate the presence of Native American cultural resources in the immediate project area (at that time the project area was limited to the existing CUP area). The NAHC provided a list of 18 Native American tribes or individuals to contact for further information.

(Appendix B of Cogstone, 2010) Letters requesting information on any heritage sites and containing maps and project information were sent by mail to the 18 Native American contacts on April 26, 2010. One response to the letters was received and consisted of a telephone call from Randy Guzman-Folkes, identified as a contact for the Chumash, Fenandeño, Tataviam, Shoshone Paiute, and Yaqui tribes. Mr. Guzman-Folkes advised that the entire area is sensitive for prehistoric cultural resources and that any earthmoving should be monitored by a Native American (Cogstone, 2010). Notwithstanding Mr. Guzman-Folkes' input, no provisions were recommended in the 2010 assessment for Native American monitoring. (It should be noted that the 2010 outreach effort was conducted by Cogstone as a consultant to the Operator/Applicant, and was conducted prior to amendments to the PRC resulting from Assembly Bill (AB) 52 of 2015 that added the requirement for the County, as the CEQA lead agency, to notify tribal representatives of proposed projects and invite Native American tribes to consult with the County regarding tribal cultural resources and potential effects of a project.) No additional Native American outreach by Cogstone was documented in Cogstone's 2017 supplemental assessment for the proposed CUP expansion area.

In accordance with PRC 21080.3.1, in 2018 after receiving and deeming complete the application for the currently proposed Project, the Ventura County RMA notified the designated contact of, or a tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notification of projects within the Project area. Only one tribe has requested notification: the Barbareño-Ventureño Band of Mission Indians. Accordingly, the RMA sent a letter to Ms. Julie Tumamait-Stenslie, Chair and designated contact for the tribe, on December 15, 2018. The letter included a brief description of the Project, a map illustrating the location of the Project, and an invitation for the tribal representatives to consult with the County regarding the Project.

No response was received from the Barbareño-Ventureño Band of Mission Indians, and a result of the RMA's outreach no tribal cultural resources were identified within the Project site. Thus, there will be no impacts to tribal cultural resources and no mitigation is required. The RMA considers its consultation responsibilities under PRC 21083.1 complete.

Mitigation for Impact CR-3

No mitigation required.

3.6.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

Impacts to cultural resources tend to be site specific and are assessed on a site by site basis. As discussed above, the Project site contains two previously recorded cultural resources and 11 additional resources have been recorded within 1 mile of the site. Of the two resources documented within the Project site, one has been recommended not eligible for the CRHR, and the other will not be impacted by the Project. No tribal cultural resources were identified that would be affected by the Project. The Project analysis above also recognizes the potential for inadvertent discovery of unknown cultural resources that may be present within the site and provides mitigation to ensure potential impacts to such sites would be less than significant. Projects within the region considered for the cumulative impact analysis, as discussed in Section 3.1.5 of this EIR, include a variety of activities ranging from extension of existing conditional use permits and establishment of open space, to smaller-scale agricultural, residential, and commercial operations. Some of these projects have the potential for project-specific impacts to cultural resources. However, the Project would have a less than significant project-specific impact on cultural resources and no impact on tribal cultural resources. As such, it would not incrementally contribute to cumulatively considerable cultural resources impacts and no additional mitigation is required.

3.6.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies associated with cultural resources is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

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SECTION 3.7 – GEOLOGY AND SOILS

SECTION 3.7–GEOLOGY AND SOILS

This section provides an evaluation of potential impacts of the Project associated with geology and soils, and includes consideration of paleontological resources consistent with 2018 CEQA Guidelines amendments which incorporate paleontological resources to the geology and soils checklist in Appendix G of the Guidelines. Certain information regarding geologic conditions and slope stability analysis referenced in this section is based on the December 3, 2016, "Updated Geologic and Geotechnical Review Report, Modification to Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for Pacific Rock Quarry, as Related to California Mine ID No. 91-56-0011, 100 South Howard Road, Camarillo Area, County of Ventura" (JCR, 2016) submitted with the Project application and included as Appendix D-1 of this EIR.

3.7.1 Setting

3.7.1.1 Geologic Setting and Geologic Hazards

Regional and Site Geology

The Project site is located within the Transverse Ranges geologic province of California. The geologic configurations of the Transverse Ranges geologic province are a direct result of lateral and compressional tectonics. The unique tectonic forces of the region are a direct result of the "big bend" in the San Andreas Fault (located near the Gorman area of southern California). The "bend" is a result of contact between the North American Plate and the Pacific Plate. As a result, the Transverse Ranges geologic province is experiencing compressional stresses in addition to right-lateral strike-slip motion. This stress has produced a region characterized by east/west-trending mountain ranges, valleys, geologic structures and numerous active faults which is in contrast to the typical north/northwest structural trend typically observed elsewhere in the state. Typical faulting observed within the Transverse Ranges Geomorphic Province is trust or reverse-dip-slip faulting usually with lateral components which is attributed to the relatively high compressional forces. (JCR, 2016)

The Project site is at the southwest base of Conejo Mountain, which is comprised primarily of an intrusive dacitic dome. The intrusive dactic bedrock is assigned to the middle Miocene age Conejo Volcanics geologic formation which includes extrusive an intrusive, submarine and subaerial volcanic material. The Conejo Volcanic bedrock exposed at the site consist of three distinct volcanic units: dark gray extrusive basalt (Tcvb), light gray to pinkish gray dacitic breccias (Tcvdb), and dark intrusive basaltic rocks (bi). The dacitic breccias (Tcvdb) are comprised of unsorted angular fragments of dacite to andesite in a hard-volcanic detrital matrix comprised of dacite and andesite. The breccias are hard to very hard and resistant to erosion. The dark grey to dark olive-brown extrusive basalt (Tcvb) is mapped near the central portion of the quarry and is hard to very hard and resistant to erosion. Near vertical basaltic (bi) dikes traverse the northerly portions of the quarry in a northwesterly direction. The dikes are comprised of hard to very hard and erosion resistant dark gray basalt. (JCR, 2016)

The dacitic breccias and extrusive basalt are typically massive or unstratified. Flow banding previously mapped in the vicinity has been observed in outcrops to dip at 20-25 degrees west-northwest within the dacitic breccias. The bedrock in the quarry is moderately jointed with two primary jointing orientations. The first typically strikes N20-45E with dip angles of 55-85 degrees northwest or southeast and the second oriented with a strike of N35-70W with dip angles of 80-90 degrees southwest. The vertical dikes strike approximately N45-60W. (JCR, 2016)

Landslide Potential

The Conejo Volcanics are typically highly resistant to erosion and/or slope failure due to rock hardness and lack of potential sliding surfaces. No landslides or debris flows have occurred within or adjacent to the quarry site, and no landslides are shown to occur at or adjacent to the site on regional geologic maps by others. JCR (2016) reports that the landslide hazard potential from excavations at the quarry is very low. (JCR, 2016)

Faulting and Seismicity

The property is not known to be underlain by any seismically active or potentially active faults, and the property is not situated within a Fault Rupture Special Studies Zone of the State of California. The closest active fault is the Simi-Santa Rosa fault located approximately four miles north of the quarry. Several other significant onshore and offshore faults, which are capable of producing earthquakes, are located within 50 miles of the site. Earthquakes along any of the fault systems within approximately 50 miles of the site could cause moderate to strong ground shaking at the site. (JCR, 2016) The northerly side of the site of the quarry is located within or adjacent to a State designated seismically induced landslide hazard zone. However, JCR (2016) notes that in the event of a significant earthquake, rockfall or rock topple are potential seismically induced hazards at the site.

Seismic Hazards in Ventura County

The Ventura County ISAG (2011) discusses that ground shaking hazards are ubiquitous throughout Ventura County, but are accommodated and mitigated by requirements of the Ventura County Building Code. The ground shaking effects are most significant wherever there are subsurface conditions that result in greater earthquake wave amplitude or a longer duration of ground shaking. Ground shaking hazard areas are areas that can be expected to experience intense ground shaking during a maximum probable earthquake. Ground shaking intensity depends on the earthquake magnitude, distance and direction from the site, depth, type of earthquake, the soil and bedrock conditions beneath the site, and the topography of the site and vicinity. In the southern half of Ventura County, the potential for the highest amplification of ground shaking occurs in the Oxnard Plain and the Santa Clara River Valley. (Ventura County, 2011)

Liquefaction Hazards

Liquefaction is a process by which loose, water-saturated granular materials (silt, sand or gravel) behave for a short time as a fluid rather than as a solid mass, usually as a result of ground shaking. Structures with foundations above the liquefiable zone may be subject to increased ground oscillations. Liquefaction beneath a firm soil may result in a decoupling of the upper soil layers causing fissures to form and different impacts between the soil blocks (settlement and tilting, etc.), as well as, between the liquefied area and the adjacent non-liquefied area. The higher susceptible areas for damage occur at the boundary between these zones. All engineered structures including roadways, bridges, dams, single family housing and utility lines (water, gas, sewer) as well as, oil and gas pipeline and production, processing and storage facilities are subject to the potential damage resulting from liquefaction. If the subsurface liquefaction occurs on a slope, the liquefied layer can act as a lubricated plane for the layer(s) above it to respond to gravity and move downhill as flow failures or lateral spreading. Structures built within and across the edges of the slide may be damaged in much the same manner as if they were located on a fault. (Ventura County, 2011)

JCR (2016) review of the California Department of Mines and Geology Seismic Hazard Zone Report for the Newbury Park Quadrangle (2002) concluded that site is not located within a State-designated seismically-induced liquefaction hazard" zone due to the presence of volcanic bedrock beneath the site. (JCR, 2016)

3.7.1.2 Paleontological Resources

Paleontological resources refer to the fossilized remains or indications of once living plant and animal life. In Ventura County, paleontological remains include examples from throughout most of geological history, including the Paleozoic (600-225 million years ago), the Mesozoic (225-70 million years ago), and the Cenozoic (70 million years ago to the present). Careful scientific study of fossilized life forms preserved in the sedimentary and metamorphic rocks of the Ventura County region can result in the identification of local paleo-environmental conditions and biological evolutionary trends. In addition, certain fossil remains are only found in isolated outcrops in Ventura County and are therefore of unique scientific interest. (Ventura County, 2011)

The Ventura County ISAG (2011) identifies that the geologic formation in which a proposed project would be located can be used to establish the likelihood of paleontological resources being present and their relative importance. Table 3.7-1, "Paleontological Resource Potential of Geologic Formations in Ventura County," provides a ranking of geologic formation paleontological importance in the Ventura County area. The Project site is primarily within the Conejo Volcanics formation which, as shown in Table 3.7-1, is identified in the Ventura County ISAG as having no paleontological importance.

Table 3.7-1. Paleontological Resource Potential of Geologic Formations in Ventura County

Formation	Geologic Age	Paleontological Importance
Santa Susana	Paleocene	High
Llajas	Eocene	High
Sespe	Oligocene	High
Saugus	Pliocene/ Pleistocene	High
Las Posas Sand	Pliocene/ Pleistocene	Moderate to High
Vaqueros Sandstone	Oligocene	Moderate to High
Pico	Pliocene	Moderate to High
Monterey	Miocene	Moderate
Topanga Group	Oligocene / Miocene	Moderate
Chatsworth	Cretaceous	Moderate
Caliente	Miocene	Moderate
Sisquoc	Miocene	Moderate
Santa Margarita	Miocene	Moderate
Quatal	Pliocene	Low
Lockwood Clay	Pliocene	Low
Plush Ranch	Oligocene / Miocene	Low
Rincon Shale	Miocene	Low
Coldwater Sandstone	Eocene	Low
Cozy Dell Shale	Eocene	Low
Matilija Sandstone	Eocene	Low
Juncal	Eocene	Low
Towsley	Pliocene / Miocene	Low
Castaic	Miocene	Low
Conejo Volcanics	**Miocene**	**None**

Source: Ventura County, 2011.

3.7.1.3 Project Site Soils

Soils on the property are generally igneous rock and rocky loam. Soils are poorly developed in and around the mine site, including undisturbed portions within the Project site. Much of the surfaces in undisturbed

areas consist of exposed bedrock, with stony soils forming the underlying material. Table 3.7-2, "Soil Units within the Proposed CUP Boundary," presents a listing of soil units and their surface area coverage within the proposed CUP area based on Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) mapping. Appendix D-2, "Custom Soil Resource Report for Ventura Area, California-Pacific Rock Quarry Proposed CUP 2019," (NRCS, 2019) provides a detailed soil report including distribution mapping and descriptions of the characteristics of each soil unit.

Table 3.7-2. Soil Units within the Proposed CUP Boundary

Map Unit Name	Acres in Proposed CUP Boundary1	Percent of Proposed CUP Boundary
Topdeck loam, 10 to 35 percent slopes	4.3	2.0%
Cropley clay, 2 to 9 percent slopes, warm MAAT, MLRA 19	4.8	2.3%
Gilroy-Cibo complex, 5 to 15 percent slopes	6.1	2.9%
Gilroy loam, 15 to 50 percent slopes, very rocky	21.8	10.4%
Gullied land	1.4	0.7%
Hambright very rocky loam, 15 to 75 percent slopes	26.3	12.5%
Igneous rock land	115.0	54.8%
Pits and dumps	28.9	13.8%
Water	1.1	0.5%
Totals for Area of Interest	**209.6**	**100.0%**

Source: NRCS, 2019.

1. Approximate proposed CUP boundary as generated in custom soils report.

3.7.1.4 Regulatory Framework

State

Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zone Act

The State Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act (A-P Act) of 1972 was passed to mitigate the hazards associated with surface faulting in California. Administered by the California Department of Conservation (DOC), the A-P Act prevents construction of buildings used for human occupancy on the surface traces of active faults. Before a project can be permitted, cities and counties must require a geologic investigation to demonstrate that proposed buildings will not be constructed across active faults.

Seismic Hazards Mapping Act

The 1990 Seismic Hazards Mapping Act and related regulations establish a statewide minimum public safety standard for mitigation of earthquake hazards. The purpose of this Act is to protect the public from the effects of strong ground shaking, liquefaction, landslides, or other ground failure as well as other hazards caused by earthquakes. The Act provides the minimum level of mitigation needed to reduce the risk of a building collapse. Under this Act, the lead agency can withhold permits until geologic investigations are conducted and mitigation measures are incorporated into building plans. In addition, the Act addresses not only seismically induced hazards but also expansive soils, settlement, and slope stability. The program and actions mandated by this Act closely resemble those of the A-P Act by requiring:

- The State Geologist to delineate various "seismic hazard zones"; and

- Cities, counties, and/or other local permitting authority to regulate certain development "projects" within these zones by withholding the development permits for a site until the geologic and soil conditions are investigated and appropriate mitigation measures (if required) are incorporated into development plans.

California Building Code

The California Building Code (CBC), known as Title 24, CCR, Part 2, specifies the acceptable design and construction requirements associated with various facilities or structures. These codes are administered and updated by the California Building Standards Commission. This Code specifies criteria for open excavation, seismic design, and load-bearing capacity directly related to construction in the State. The CBC augments the UBC and provides information for specific changes to various sections in it. The seismic building requirements under the CBC are more stringent than the federal UBC.

Surface Mining and Reclamation Act

SMARA does not specify a minimum factor of safety for slope stability. However, §3502(b)(3) indicates that final reclaimed slopes shall be flatter than the critical gradient, which implies that static factors of safety should be greater than 1.0. Additionally, the section states,

> Wherever final slopes approach the critical gradient for the type of material involved, regulatory agencies shall require an engineering analysis of slope stability. Special emphasis on slope stability and design shall be taken when public safety or adjacent property are affected.

Section 3704(f) states,

> Cut slopes, including final highwalls and quarry faces, shall have a minimum slope stability factor of safety that is suitable for the proposed end use and conform with the surrounding topography and/or approved end use.

Ventura County

The following goals pertaining to geology and soils are included in the Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020).

> **Goal COS-5 of the Conservation and Open Space Element:** To preserve and protect soil resources in the county from erosion and for agricultural productivity.
>
> **Goal COS-6 of the Conservation and Open Space Element:** To manage mineral resources in a manner that identifies economically significant mineral deposits and plans for and protects access to, extraction, and long-term conservation of mineral resources for existing and future generations.
>
> **Goal HAZ-4 of the Hazards and Safety Element:** To minimize the risk of loss of life, injury, collapse of habitable structures, and economic and social dislocations resulting from geologic and seismic hazards.

General Plan policies associated with geology and soil resources potentially applicable to the Project are identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR. Section 8701-9, "Mining and Reclamation," of the Ventura County Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance contains specific provisions pertaining to permit issuance, mining, and

reclamation of surface mines within the County. Section 8107-9.6.9, "Reclamation Plan," specifies that, among other requirements, "the creation of safe, stable slopes and the prevention of subsidence" shall be addressed in the reclamation plan and permit.

3.7.2 Impact Analysis

3.7.2.1 Significance Thresholds

This section provides an overview of the impact criteria and significance thresholds used to evaluation Project impacts associated with geology, soils, and paleontological resources based on the Ventura County ISAG (2011) and Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

Ventura County ISAG

The Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) includes the following issues pertaining to geology, soils, and paleontological issues with a summary of the significance thresholds identified in the ISAG:

ISAG 7—Paleontological Resources:

If Project disturbance is located in an area of "Quaternary Deposits (alluvium), Moderate, Low, or None" no further assessment need be done for the preliminary assessment and a determination of No Impact is made. If a Project's disturbance area is located in an area of "High," or "Moderate to High" Importance additional evaluation is needed to determine the significance of the potential impact.

ISAG 10—Fault Rupture Hazard:

Projects within or at the end of an Earthquake Fault Zone as identified by the Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act must be evaluated for potential fault rupture hazards. Projects that are not within an Earthquake Fault zone and are not located at the ends of the zone are considered to not have an impact associated with fault rupture hazard.

ISAG 11—Ground Shaking Hazard:

Projects designed to be built in accordance with the Ventura County Building Code and/or geotechnical reports regarding potential hazards that result from ground shaking are considered to have a less than significant impact for the purposes of CEQA evaluation.

ISAG 12—Liquefaction Hazards:

Projects designed to be built in accordance with the Ventura County Building Code and/or geotechnical reports regarding potential hazards that result from ground shaking are considered to have a less than significant impact for the purposes of CEQA evaluation.

ISAG 14—Landslide/Mudflow Hazard. The threshold for landslide/mudflow hazard is determined by the Public Works Agency Certified Engineering Geologist based on site-specific considerations including whether the project site is within or outside of mapped landslides or potential earthquake induced landslide zones, and in consideration of the geomorphology of hillside terrain.

ISAG 15—Expansive Soils Hazards. Based on site-specific soil expansion potential and geotechnical studies.

ISAG 16—Subsidence Hazards. Based on whether a project will expose people or structures to potential adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving subsidence if it is located within a subsidence hazard zone.

CEQA

In addition to thresholds for the ISAG items listed above, this impact assessment considers the evaluation criteria identified in the geology and soils checklist in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. These criteria address whether a project would:

a) directly or indirectly cause potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:
   i) rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault,
   ii strong seismic ground shaking,
   iii) seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction, or
   iv) landslides;
b) result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil;
c) be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse;
d) be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property;
e) have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater; or
f) directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.

3.7.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact GS-1: Project-related ground disturbance and other activities would create the potential for impacts to paleontological resources. (ISAG 7 and CEQA b) (No Impact)

Mining and other ground disturbance associated with the proposed Project would be primarily within the Conejo Volcanics formation. As shown in Table 3.7-1, above, the Conejo Volcanics formation is identified in the Ventura County ISAG as having no paleontological importance. Therefore, the proposed Project would not have the potential to result in adverse impacts to paleontological resources.

Mitigation for Impact GS-1

No mitigation required.

Impact GS-2: Project excavation could result in unstable slopes. (ISAG 11, 12, 14; CEQA a) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The Project site is an existing mining operation with areas of near vertical slopes and some areas of fill. The Project proposes to expand mining excavations the north and south of the existing quarry as shown on Figure 2-4. Excavations are proposed at 1:1 (h:v) slope ratio resulting in a series of benched highwalls along the northern, eastern and southern perimeters of the proposed mine expansion area. Benches are proposed with a design width of 50 feet wide with an approximately slope of 1 percent downward

away from the highwall face as illustrated in Figure 2-4 cross-sections. Benches would be separated by vertical 50-foot mined surfaces. The maximum overall slope height would be approximately 750 feet.

As discussed above, the property is not known to be underlain by any seismically active or potentially active faults, and the property is not situated within a Fault Rupture Special Studies Zone of the State of California. The closest active fault is the Simi-Santa Rosa fault located approximately four miles north of the quarry. Several other significant onshore and offshore faults capable of producing earthquakes are located within 50 miles of the site. Earthquakes along any of the fault systems within approximately 50 miles of the site could cause moderate to strong ground shaking at the site. In the event of a significant earthquake, rockfall or rock topple are potential seismically-induced hazards at the site. (JCR, 2016)

JCR (2016) evaluates the proposed mining excavation with respect to the site surficial and subsurface conditions. Four geologic cross-sections were evaluated considering both static and pseudo-static (representing a seismic event) to evaluate stability, and JCR (2016) states, "it is important to note that JCR's conclusions regarding the overall site geologic conditions involve projections of data observed in exposures that require that geologic conditions remain generally consistent between point of observation." Resource sampling and testing to verify consistent geologic conditions throughout the proposed mine areas has not been performed for this EIR.

JCR (2016) analysis used a seismic coefficient of 0.15g to simulate an average horizontal force under seismic shaking for the pseudo-static condition. JCR's evaluation concluded that the proposed mine plan will result in finished slopes that have adequate factors of safety, with the factors of safety exceeding 1.25 when calculated based on a 50 percent reduction in shear strength and factors of safety exceeding 1.5 when based on a 10 percent reduction in shear strengths. JCR (2016) concludes that the proposed mining plan configuration is adequate for its intended final use from a geotechnical engineering standpoint. Notwithstanding its conclusion, the JCR (2016) analysis also provides recommendations for site inspections and monitoring to evaluate slope performance, stability, and to address any hazardous conditions. JCR (2016) recommendations include quarterly site inspections and preparation of annual reports by an engineering geologist to provide a summary of site conditions and observations.

For the proposed end use of agriculture and based on the calculated factors of safety discussed above, potential slope such failures may not present a substantial risk a risk of loss, injury, or death. However, based on available information and the analysis that can be conducted at present, it is not possible to exclude the potential occurrence of localized, adversely-oriented, and/or discontinuities within the planned excavation areas that could create conditions under which the calculated factors of safety may not be achieved and an increased potential for slope failures under static, seismic, or saturated conditions would exist. Slope failures under such circumstances would create the potential for disturbance (resulting from slope failure) outside of the planned excavation area. Such disturbance could pose a safety risk and cause an increase in the severity of environmental effects (e.g., additional loss of vegetation/habitat, additional visual effects from visibility of disturbed areas, etc.). Slope instability would also pose risk of injury to workers or others within the quarry during operations. The potential for unanticipated slope failure is considered a potentially significant impact. Mitigation measures MM GS-2(a) requires site-specific materials testing and geotechnical analysis prior to mining within planned mine areas and MM GS-2(b) requires quarterly inspection and verification of, or adjustments to, the mine plan based on observed conditions. Implementation of MM GS-2(a) and MM

GS-2(b) would ensure that mined conditions achieve factors of safety required by the County in consideration of site-specific geologic conditions and would reduce Impact GS-2 to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact GS-2:

MM GS-2(a): *Prior to excavation within planned mine expansion areas, the Permittee shall retain a County-approved qualified engineering geologist experienced in evaluating the stability of hard rock slopes to prepare and submit to Ventura County for review and approval geotechnical evaluations for each new area of planned mining. The geotechnical and slope stability evaluations shall be based on materials sampling and testing to be conducted within the planned mine areas. Materials sampling and testing shall include borings of sufficient depth and distribution to ensure accurate characterization of geologic conditions within the planned mine areas. The geotechnical and slope stability evaluations shall assess the groundwater conditions, material types and shear strengths for planned mine areas, and verify that the proposed final slope will achieve minimum static and pseudostatic factors deemed appropriate by the County. With the exception of boring as needed to perform the sampling and testing as required in this measure, no blasting or other excavation within planned mine areas shall be conducted until the County has reviewed and approved the evaluation required herein and confirmed that planned mining can proceed in accordance with the approved mine plan and reclamation plan.*

MM GS-2(b): *The Permittee shall retain a County-approved qualified engineering geologist experienced in evaluating the stability of hard rock slopes to inspect quarry slopes on a routine or other basis as determined by the County Geologist. The results of the inspection and any recommendations by the engineering geologist or geotechnical engineer shall be documented and submitted to the County within 30 days following the inspection. Inspection documentation shall summarize the rock types observed, provide detailed rock mass descriptions and measured discontinuity orientations, observed seepage conditions, and compare the observed conditions relative to those identified in the evaluations required as specified in mitigation measure MM GS-2(a). If the conditions vary from the evaluations conducted pursuant to mitigation measure MM GS-2(a), the engineering geologist shall evaluate whether the changes have an adverse impact on slope stability, and, if so, provide recommendations to mitigate the slope stability concerns to achieve the minimum static and pseudostatic factors of safety required by the County. Recommendations shall be incorporated into the mine plan and reclamation plan and shall be submitted to the County for review and approval prior to the further advancement of mining.*

Impact GS-3: Placement of fill material for reclamation could create the potential for hazards associated with liquefaction, landslides/mudflow, expansive soils, and subsidence. (ISAG 12, 14, 15, 16; CEQA a(iii), a(iv), c and d) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Slope stability during and following mining is discussed at Impact GS-2. In addition to slopes, the Project would create additional benched, pad, and other surfaces that would receive fill material for reclamation purposes. The Project would utilize fill material consisting of soil, mud, rocks, and minor amounts organic material, and fill on pad areas would be placed in a manner suitable for agricultural production. Fill would be placed at a maximum of finished slope angle of 3:1 (horizontal:vertical). The proposed reclamation plan illustrates typical fill depth on pad areas of approximately 40 feet, with the depth in some areas of up to approximately 150 feet.

The stability of fill material would depend on factors including placement techniques (including compaction standards), moisture content, final slopes, and on the characteristics of the imported fill material. Depending on these factors, fill material in some instances would have the potential for

subsidence, compaction (settling over time), liquefaction during seismic events, slides or sloughing from sloped fill areas, and shrinkage and swelling. Fill areas would be used for agricultural purposes under reclaimed conditions and no new structures are proposed to be developed on the reclaimed site. The proposed reclamation plan identifies that fill would be placed and compacted by the utilization of heavy construction equipment using typical compaction techniques such as track walking or wheel rolling. The proposed reclamation plan also identifies that excavation areas will be observed and approved by the engineering geologist and / or geotechnical (soils) engineer prior to the placement of fill.

The potential for liquefaction, landslides/mudflow, expansive soils, and subsidence of reclaimed fill area cannot be determined at this time as the characteristics of fill material are unknown. Therefore, given uncertainties associated with the type of fill material and future site-specific conditions, this evaluation concludes that the potential for hazards associated with liquefaction, landslides/mudflow, expansive soils, or subsidence of fill material under reclaimed conditions is potentially significant. Mitigation measure MM GS-3 would ensure proper assessment of fill material and site conditions during the time of fill placement and result in compaction and other fill placement design measures that would ensure this potential impact is reduced to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact GS-3

MM GS-3: *The Permittee shall monitor and document the receipt of all imported material received at the site and shall prepare and update an engineered fill placement plan as necessary to ensure that all imported fill material is characterized and placed for reclamation in a manner to sufficiently minimize the potential for hazards associated with liquefaction, landslides/mudflow, expansive soils, and subsidence under reclaimed site conditions. The engineered fill placement plan shall identify the locations and compaction standards for imported fill material placement and shall provide substantial evidence that fill material will be stable and suitable for the proposed end uses of the site. The plan shall address and provide for the various types of imported material to be received at the site and shall provide sampling and testing, compaction, soil moisture content determinations and other protocol to ensure material and site-specific placement and compaction standards are implemented. The initial engineered fill placement plan shall be prepared and submitted to the County within one year of the initial receipt of fill material at the site under the Project and shall be supplemented and updated and submitted to the County annually thereafter and include records of all fill material received and placed at the site. The County shall have the authority to direct amendments to the engineered fill placement plan if deemed necessary by the County to achieve suitable reclaimed site conditions.*

Impact GS-4: Project ground disturbance and stormwater runoff from disturbed areas could result in increased erosion and loss of topsoil. (CEQA b). (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Expansion of the existing mining area and backfill of soils on active and reclaimed quarry floor would result in the potential for increased stormwater runoff. Topsoil is limited on much of the site, with the exception of an area of existing agricultural use in an approximately 10.8-acre area in the western portion of the site. This area has 4.1 acres of Prime Farmland and 6.7 acres of Unique Farmland and is considered to contain important topsoil resources; however, this area would not be graded or otherwise modified as a result of the Project and stormwater runoff from other areas of the site would not be directed across this area.

As discussed at Impact WR-3 in Section 3.10, "Water Resources," of this EIR, additional or existing runoff could cause erosion and sediment transport on the Project site, and resulting siltation and

sedimentation in onsite and offsite basins and ponds. Impact WR-3 provides additional information regarding projected stormwater runoff from the site and upgradient areas under conditions with implementation of the Project. Documentation submitted with the application discusses that "the expanded mining areas to the north and south (especially the north) will be shaped in such a way that the runoff from those areas will enter the detention basins" and that "additional detention basins can be created, if needed." (Holmes, 2019) In addition to capturing runoff in onsite basins, the Applicant proposes to further minimize the potential for erosion and to control the sediment through implementation of the following Best Management Practices (BMPs):

- The site will be graded to direct storm water away from areas with high erosion potential.
- The site plan configuration and gradient will provide for low-velocity, non-scour conditions at the desilting basing prior to discharge to the pond.
- Sand or gravel bags will be used, as needed, to prevent erosion and retain water on site.
- The desilting basin will be maintained to capture sediment.

Controlling and capturing stormwater runoff in onsite basins, designing onsite water conveyances in compliance with SMARA and County standards, and avoiding release of stormwater runoff to offsite areas would minimize the potential for increased site runoff, erosion, and loss of topsoil Mitigation Measure MM WR-3, as presented in Section 3.10 of this EIR, requires additional hydrology studies and verification of onsite stormwater conveyance and containment facilities to ensure the Project design and onsite stormwater controls and basins are sufficient to reduce potential impacts associated with stormwater runoff to less than significant. Implementation of MM WR-3 would reduce Impact GS-4 to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact GS-4:

Implement mitigation measure MM WR-3.

Impact GS-5: The Project septic system would have the potential to be located in areas with soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of the proposed septic system. (CEQA e). (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The existing operation utilizes portable restrooms and on-site waste holding tanks that are cleaned and pumped by a private waste disposal contractor. The Project proposes to install a new onsite septic system to service the proposed 24-hour security trailer and a structure housing bathrooms, a sink, and a shower. These facilities are proposed to be served by the onsite septic system that would include a new 2,000-gallon septic tank and basal sand filtration bed. The Applicant has submitted preliminary studies and design of a potential septic system, but has not submitted an application for septic system approval at this time. The County Division of Environmental Health oversees and permits onsite septic systems. Geotechnical and other design studies are required to be submitted for review and approval of a permit prior to installation of a septic system. That permit process and requirements is discussed further at Impact HM-3 in Section 3.11, "Hazards and Hazardous Materials," of this EIR. The County process would ensure that the soils utilized for the septic system would be capable to support use of the septic system. Mitigation measure MM HM-3 provides specific requirements for design and review of the proposed septic system and would ensure that potential impacts associated with soils capability for use of the septic system would be less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact GS-5

Implement mitigation measure MM HM-3.

3.7.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

Impacts associated with geology and soils impacts are generally site-specific and are assessed on a site-specific basis. The cumulative projects discussed in Section 3.1.5 would have the potential for project-specific impacts associated with geologic and/or soils resources, but such potential impacts would be limited to the immediate area of these projects, would be expected to be minimized by project-specific measures and compliance with regulatory requirements and building standards, and would not create the potential for combining with the Project impacts discussed in Section 3.7.2.2, above. Therefore, the Project would not incrementally contribute to cumulatively considerable geology or soil resources impacts and no additional mitigation is required for cumulative impacts.

3.7.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies associated with geology and soil resources is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

SECTION 3.8 – NOISE AND VIBRATION

SECTION 3.8–NOISE AND VIBRATION

This section provides an evaluation of potential noise and vibration impacts of the Project. A "Noise and Groundborne Vibration Impact Assessment," (Sespe, 2020) was submitted with the application and is included in Appendix E of this EIR.

3.8.1 Setting

3.8.1.1 Noise and Groundborne Vibration Fundamentals

Characteristics of Noise

Noise is often described as unwanted sound. Sound is defined as any pressure variation in air that the human ear can detect. If the pressure variations occur frequently enough (at least 20 times per second) they can be heard and are called sound. The number of pressure variations per second is called the frequency of sound, and is expressed as cycles per second, called Hertz (Hz).

Measuring sound directly in terms of pressure would require a very large and awkward range of numbers. To avoid this, the decibel scale was devised. The decibel scale uses the hearing threshold (20 micropascals of pressure), as a point of reference, defined as 0 decibels (dB). Other sound pressures are then compared to the reference pressure, and the logarithm is taken to keep the numbers in a practical range. The decibel scale allows a million-fold increase in pressure to be expressed as 120 dB. Another useful aspect of the decibel scale is that changes in decibel levels correspond closely to human perception of relative loudness as presented in Table 3.8-1, "Typical A-Weighted Sound Levels of Common Noise Sources."

Because the decibel scale is based on logarithms, two noise sources do not combine in a simple additive fashion, but rather logarithmically. Under the decibel scale, a doubling of sound energy corresponds to a 3 dB increase. For example, if two identical noise sources each produce a noise level of 50 dB, the combined sound level would be 53 dB, not 100 dB. Under the decibel scale, three sources of equal loudness together produce a sound level of approximately 5 dBA louder than one source, and ten sources of equal loudness together produce a sound level of approximately 10 dB louder than the single source. (Caltrans, 2013)

The perceived loudness of sound is dependent upon many factors, including sound pressure level and frequency content. However, within the usual range of environmental noise levels, perception of loudness is relatively predictable, and can be approximated by weighing the sound level pressures between 1,000 and 5,000 Hz, which represent the most sensitive frequencies perceived by a healthy human ear and coincidentally the natural frequency range of human speech. This weighting network is referred to as the A-scale. There is a strong correlation between A-weighted sound levels (expressed as dBA) and community response to noise. For this reason, the A-weighted sound level has become the standard tool of environmental noise assessment. All noise levels reported in this section are A-weighted. Table 3.8-1 provides sound pressure levels of typical noise sources in units of dBA and micropascals (μPa) of pressure.

Community noise is commonly described in terms of the ambient noise level, which is defined as the all-encompassing noise level associated with a given noise environment. A common statistical tool to measure the ambient noise level is the average, or equivalent, sound level (L_{eq}) over a given time period (usually one hour or less). The L_{eq} is also the foundation of the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) noise descriptor described below, which has a strong correlation with community response to noise. The maximum sound level (L_{max}) represents the highest instantaneous noise level recorded over a given time period (usually one hour or less), and can also be utilized to assess community noise impacts.

Table 3.8-1. Typical A-Weighted Sound Levels of Common Noise Sources

Loudness Ratio	Micropascals (µPa)	dBA	Description
128	63,245,553	130	Threshold of Pain
64	20,000,000	120	Jet aircraft Take-Off at 100 feet
32	6,324,555	110	Riveting Machine at Operator's Position
16	2,000,000	100	Shotgun at 200 feet
8	632,456	90	Bulldozer at 50 feet
4	200,000	80	Diesel Locomotive at 300 feet
2	63,246	70	Commercial Jet Aircraft Interior During Flight
1	20,000	60	Normal Conversation Speech at 5-10 feet
0.5	6,325	50	Open Office Background Level
0.25	2,000	40	Background Level Within a Residence
0.125	632	30	Soft Whisper at 2 feet
0.0625	200	20	Interior of Recording Studio

Source: Sespe, 2020. (US EPA, 1971; Federal Interagency Committee on Noise, 1992).

Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) is based upon the average noise level over a 24-hour day, with a +5 decibel weighing applied to noise occurring during evening (7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) hours and a +10 decibel weighing applied to noise occurring during nighttime (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) hours. These additions are made to account for the noise sensitive time periods during the evening and nighttime hours, when people are generally at home and more sensitive to sound. Because CNEL represents a 24- hour average, it tends to smooth out short-term variations in the noise environment. CNEL based noise standards are commonly used to assess noise impacts associated with variable noise sources, such as traffic, railroad and aircraft noise.

The maximum sound level (L_{max}) presents the highest instantaneous noise level recorded over a given time period (usually one hour or less). This value is useful as it can reveal short-term, intermittent noise sources (e.g., industrial equipment, etc.) within a noise environment, which would be lost with CNEL noise descriptor.

Characteristics of Groundborne Vibration

Vibration is like noise in that it involves a source, a transmission path, and a receiver. While vibration is related to noise, it differs in that noise is generally considered to be pressure waves transmitted through air, while vibration is usually associated with transmission through a structure. As with noise, vibration consists of an amplitude and frequency. A person's response to vibration depends on their individual sensitivity as well as the amplitude and frequency of the source.

Vibration can be described in terms of acceleration, velocity, or displacement. A common practice is to monitor vibration measures in terms of peak particle velocities (inches/second). Standards pertaining to perception as well as damage to structures have been developed for vibration in terms of peak particle velocity. At high enough amplitudes, ground vibration has the potential to damage structures and/or cause cosmetic damage (e.g., crack plaster). Ground vibration can also be a source of annoyance to individuals who live or work close to vibration-generating activities. Traffic, including heavy trucks traveling on a highway, rarely generates vibration amplitudes high enough to cause structural or cosmetic damage.

As vibrations travel outward from the source, they excite the particles of rock and soil through which they pass and cause them to oscillate by a few ten-thousandths to a few thousandths of an inch. Differences in subsurface geologic conditions and distance from the source of vibration would result in different vibration levels characterized by different frequencies and intensities. In all cases, vibration amplitudes would decrease with increasing distance. The maximum rate or velocity of particle movement is the commonly accepted descriptor of the vibration "strength." This is referred to as the peak particle velocity (PPV) and is typically measured in inches per second.

Human response to vibration is difficult to quantify. Vibration can be felt or heard well below the levels that produce any damage to structures. The duration of the event has an effect on human response, as does frequency. Generally, as the duration and vibration frequency increase, the potential for adverse human response increases.

Human and structural response to different vibration levels is influenced by a number of factors, including ground type, distance between source and receptor, duration, and the number of perceived vibration events. Table 3.8-2, "General Human Responses to Vibration," displays the results of a 1974 study which relates human response to transient vibration sources (i.e., mining equipment) in terms of particle velocity (PPV) vibration levels.

Table 3.8-2. General Human Responses to Vibration Levels

Human Response to Vibration	Peak Vibration Threshold (in/sec PPV)
Severe	2
Strongly perceptible	0.9
Distinctly perceptible	0.24
Barely perceptible	0.035

Source: Sespe, 2020. (US EPA, 1971; Federal Interagency Committee on Noise, 1992).

3.8.1.2 Existing Setting

A "Noise and Groundborne Vibration Impact Assessment," (Sespe, 2020) was submitted with the application and was peer reviewed by the County's EIR consultant Benchmark Resources and subconsultant Environmental Science Associates (ESA) for adequacy to inform the analysis in this EIR. Information from that assessment is incorporated herein and the report is included as Appendix E of this EIR.

Non-Transportation (Onsite) Noise Sources and Receptors

As discussed in Chapter 2, "Project Description," the Project site is located in a semi-rural area of unincorporated Ventura County. Existing noise sources near the Project site receptors include equipment noise from existing quarry operations at the site, noise from nearby agricultural operations, traffic noise from nearby roadways, and natural sounds (wind, plants rustling, birds/insects, etc.). Receptors R1, R2, and R3 within the vicinity of the Project site are described below and are shown on Figure 3.8-1, "Representative Receptors for Onsite Noise and Vibration Analysis." These receptors have the highest potential to be adversely affected by on-site noise sources, identified here as non-transportation noise sources. Transportation noise sources associated with vehicles to and from the site are discussed subsequently.

Receptor 1 (R1) is the funeral home located at the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery to the west of the Project site. The funeral home is on the west side of the Conejo Mountain Memorial property, away

from the Project site. The cemetery grave yard is in the southern and eastern sides of the memorial property, between the funeral home building and the Project site. Additionally, an above-ground mausoleum is located on the on the southern side of the memorial property. Noise sources near R1 include grounds keeping activities at the cemetery, cars on Howard Road, and nearby agricultural activities. The existing aggregate plant generates periodic noise that is audible at R1 as background noise. The County General Plan identifies cemeteries as a noise-sensitive land use, and for the purposes of this evaluation the funeral home has been selected as the location within the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery property at which County noise standards are applied in assessing potential impacts.

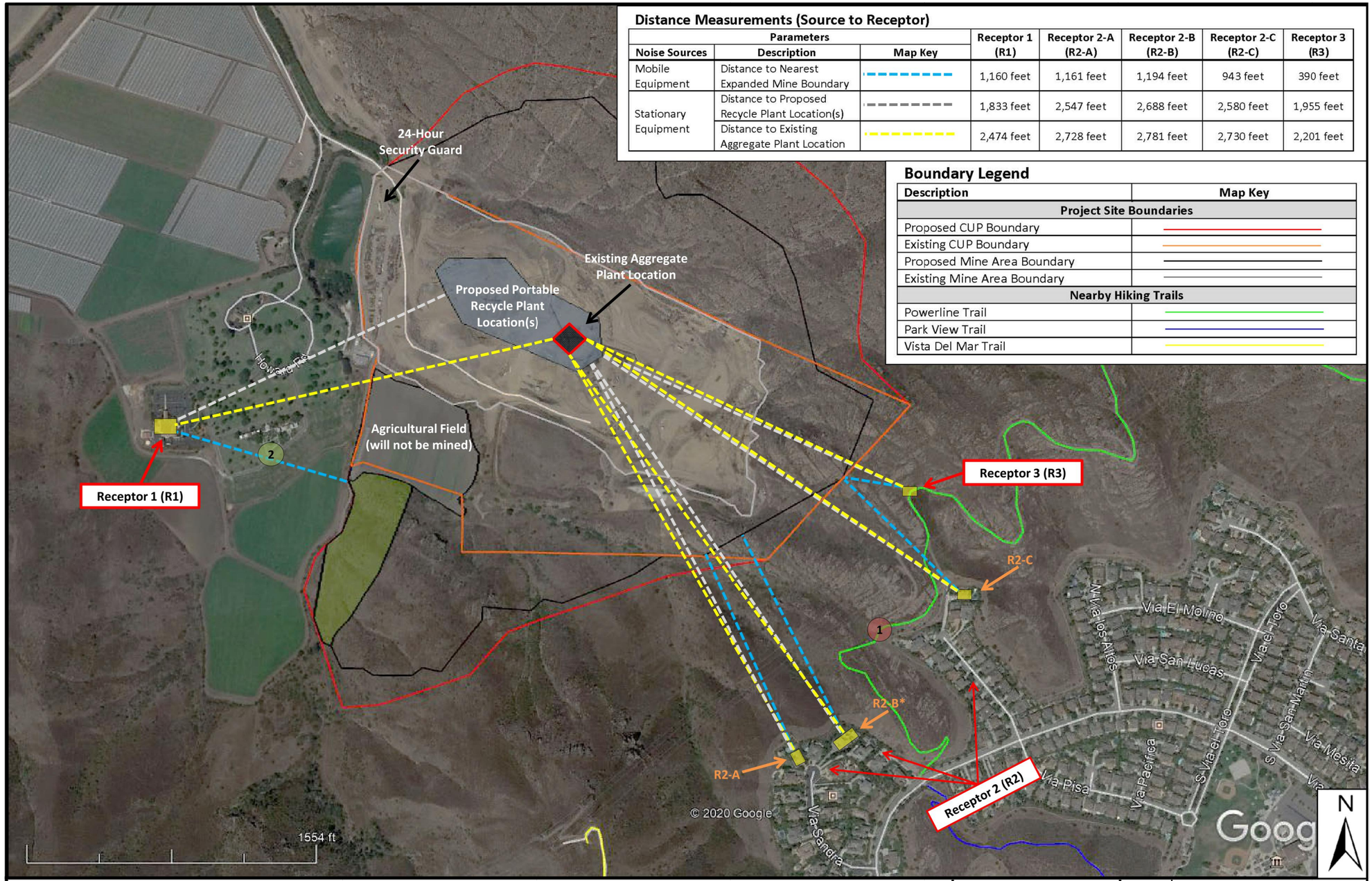
Receptor 2 (R2) is defined by three receptors that collectively represent the group of residences to the east-southeast of the Project site, within the City of Thousand Oaks. The R2 residences nearest to the expanded mining boundary are located at the ends of Via Sandra and Via Pisa in the Dos Vientos Ranch community. Noise and vibration impacts are analyzed at the three (3) closest residences in this area, identified as R2-A, R2-B, and R2-C, and represent worst-case impacts for the entire receptor area. Existing noise sources in the R2 area include cars on roads to the east and other intermittent residential community noise sources (e.g., landscape maintenance and other noise-generating outdoor activities) and environmental noises (e.g., wind). Sespe (2020) reports that existing noise sources at the Project site associated with ongoing mining and processing activities (i.e., excavation equipment, aggregate processing plant) were generally not audible in the R2 area at the time of ambient noise measurement site visits on December 20 and 21, 2018. A ridge between the R2 area and currently active portions of the existing operation generally blocks line-of-sight and noise transmission between the existing mining and processing areas of the Project site and residential receptors in the R2 area.

Receptor 3 (R3) represents the various hiking trails located in open space areas to the southeast, east and northeast of the Project site. R3 is analyzed as a representative "recreation/open space" sensitive receptor per the County's 2040 General Plan. Existing noise sources near Receptor R3 primarily include residential noise sources, periodic and variable buzzing of overhead transmission lines, and natural sounds (e.g., birds/insects, plants rustling in the wind, etc.).

Long-duration (24-hour) and short-duration (15-minute) ambient noise measurements were collected on December 20 and 21, 2018 at Monitoring Locations 1 and 2 shown in Figure 3.8-1. The Applicant indicates that operational activities were occurring at the site on the days during which measurements were taken. Monitoring Location 1 is considered representative of noise levels at Receptors R2 and R3, and Monitoring Location 2 is considered representative of noise levels at Receptor R1. (Sespe, 2020)

To estimate evening and nighttime noise levels for certain receptors, measurements collected at the long-duration (24-hour) reference locations were compared to measurements at the short-duration (15-minute) monitoring locations during the same time of day to determine the dBA difference between the two points. For example, Monitoring Location 2 measurements (15-minute) collected between 3:37 p.m. and 3:52 p.m. when compared to noise levels collected at the Monitoring Location 1 24-hour reference point during the same time period show a noise level difference of -3.2 L_{eq} dBA. This difference between the measured values can be used as a correction factor, which is utilized to estimate the evening and nighttime $L_{eq}1H$ noise levels at short- duration monitoring locations. Appendix E provides additional details regarding these calculations.

The results of ambient measurements collected at Monitoring Locations 1 and 2 as representative of non-transportation receptors R1, R2, and R3 during the daytime, evening, and nighttime periods are summarized in Table 3.8-3, "Ambient Monitoring Results at Non-Transportation Noise Source Receptors." Complete noise measurement logs are included in Appendix E.



Distance Measurements (Source to Receptor)

Parameters			Receptor 1 (R1)	Receptor 2-A (R2-A)	Receptor 2-B (R2-B)	Receptor 2-C (R2-C)	Receptor 3 (R3)
Noise Sources	Description	Map Key					
Mobile Equipment	Distance to Nearest Expanded Mine Boundary		1,160 feet	1,161 feet	1,194 feet	943 feet	390 feet
Stationary Equipment	Distance to Proposed Recycle Plant Location(s)		1,833 feet	2,547 feet	2,688 feet	2,580 feet	1,955 feet
	Distance to Existing Aggregate Plant Location		2,474 feet	2,728 feet	2,781 feet	2,730 feet	2,201 feet

Boundary Legend

Description	Map Key
Project Site Boundaries	
Proposed CUP Boundary	
Existing CUP Boundary	
Proposed Mine Area Boundary	
Existing Mine Area Boundary	
Nearby Hiking Trails	
Powerline Trail	
Park View Trail	
Vista Del Mar Trail	

Source: Google Earth (2020)

- Receptor Locations
- 24-Hour Monitoring Location
- 15-Minute Monitoring Location(s)
- Proposed Recycle Plant Location(s)
- Existing Aggregate Plant Location

* Figure 5 shows the expanded mining areas that Receptor 2-B (R2-B) will have a direct line-of-sight (LoS) with no attenuation due to intervening topography. Therefore, worst case noise impacts @ R2-B were determined by assessing mobile equipment operating within LoS of R2-B, and not at the nearest mining boundary (as shown here).

SESPE CONSULTING, INC.

FIGURE	SITE AERIAL & FACILITY RECEPTORS
2	Pacific Rock Quarry 1000 South Howard Road Camarillo, CA 93012

PROJECT #:	PA01.09.01	DATE:	11/3/20
SCALE:	As Shown	DRAWN BY:	GPS

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SOURCE: Sespe, 2020

Representative Receptors for Onsite Noise and Vibration Analysis
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.8.1

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

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Table 3.8-3. Ambient Monitoring Results for Non-Transportation Noise Source Receptors

Receptor	Receptor Type	Date(s) Measured	Time Period(s)	Daytime $L_{eq}1H^A$	Evening $L_{eq}1H^A$	Nighttime $L_{eq}1H^A$
R1[B]	Conejo Mountain Funeral Home	12/20/2018	Daytime	41.6 dBA	32.9 dBA	32.7 dBA
R2 and R3[C]	Residence(s) and Open Space/Trails	12/20/2018 12/21/2018	24-Hours	44.8 dBA	36.2 dBA	36.0 dBA

Source: Sespe, 2020.
Notes:
A. Daytime = 6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m., Evening = 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., Nighttime = 10:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m. (Ventura County, 2020).
B. Receptor R1 noise levels per ambient measurements at Monitoring Location 2 shown on Figure 3.8-1.
C. Receptor R2 and R2 noise levels per ambient measurements at Monitoring Location 1 shown on Figure 3.8-1.

Transportation (Offsite) Noise Sources and Receptors

Under existing and planned operations, trucks depart the site to the north then west along Howard Road, then turn right (north) on Pancho Road to Pleasant Valley Road. From there, haul trucks either turn right (northbound) on Pleasant Valley Road for access to U.S. Highway 101 southbound or northbound or turn left (westbound) on Pleasant Valley Road. Inbound trucks use this same road network. The existing ambient noise environment at receptors along this haul route is consistent with that of typical semi-urban/commercial areas. Existing noise sources include traffic on nearby roadways, agricultural operations, and commercial/industrial noise from facilities located on Pancho Road.

Receptors located within the vicinity of the haul route were selected for two groups of residences located near unique portions of the haul road geometry. Receptor 4 (R4) and Receptor 5 (R5) represent the worst-case impact for all receptors in their respective areas. Figure 3.8-2, "Representative Receptors for Offsite Noise Analysis," shows the locations of the haul routes and receptors analyzed.

Receptor 4 (R4) is the residence located in unincorporated Ventura County, just south of the intersection of Howard Road and Pancho Road. Existing noise sources near R4 primarily include nearby agricultural activities, as it is surrounded by active agricultural operations on all sides. Traffic noise generate by roadways to the north (e.g., Pleasant Valley Road, U.S. Highway 101, etc.) are faintly audible. Haul truck activity associated with the existing quarry operation and surrounding agricultural operations are expected to be the predominant existing source of noise at this location. This receptor generally has an unobstructed view of the haul route and passing trucks on Howard Road/Pancho Road. Due to the large distance between R3 and the Project site (approximately 0.75 miles), existing aggregate plant and mining operations during the daytime are generally not anticipated to be audible from this location.

Receptor 5 (R5) collectively represents the group of residences near the intersection of Pleasant Valley Road and Pancho Road within the City of Camarillo. Noise sources near Receptor 5 (R5) include cars on roads to the south and east (Pleasant Valley Road, U.S. Highway 101), as well as nearby agricultural and commercial operations. Pleasant Valley Road is a heavily trafficked roadway adjacent to R5, as it connects the U.S. Highway 101 to the north and the Pacific Coast Highway (State Route 1) to the south. Due to the large distance and intervening structures between R5 and the Project site, existing aggregate plant and mining operations are not audible from this location.

The residences nearest to the intersection, as well as one to the north and west, were assessed. Noise measurements were taken and impacts are analyzed at the three (3) representative residences in this

area. The receptors are identified as R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C, and represent worst-case impacts for the R5 receptor area as the residences at these receptors are nearest to the study haul routes. Noise impacts at other residences in this area would be less than those of the R5 receptors. There is an existing 6-foot sound wall that runs adjacent to these receptors along the entire length of Pleasant Valley Road.

Ambient noise measurements were collected at Receptors R4 and the three R5 receptors on January 23 and 24, 2019. Both long-duration (24-hour) and short-duration (15-minute) measurements were collected. Additional detail regarding the monitoring results and calculations are included in Appendix E. Table 3.8-4, "Ambient Monitoring Results at Transportation Noise Source Receptors," presents the existing ambient noise levels at representative receptors along the Project haul routes.

Table 3.8-4. Ambient Monitoring Results at Transportation Noise Source Receptors

Receptor	Receptor Type	Date(s) Measured	Average Hour $L_{eq}1H^{A, B}$			CNEL Outdoor
			Daytime	*Evening*	*Nighttime*	
R4	Residence	1/23/2019 1/24/2019	59.8 dBA	50.7 dBA	47.9 dBA	58.9 dBA
R5	Residence(s)	1/23/2019 1/24/2019	77.4 dBA	66.3 dBA	65.4 dBA	62.2 dBA

Source: Sespe, 2020.

Notes:

A – Daytime = 6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m., Evening = 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., Nighttime = 10:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m. (Ventura County, 2020). These values are shown for informational purposes only.

B – CNEL = Sound levels measured during the evening hours (7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.) are weighted by +5 dBA and sound levels measured during the nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.) are weighted by +10 dBA.

Background noise levels at receptors R4 and R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C were also quantified using a computer model. Specifically, ambient noise levels were determined at R4 and R5 using a computer noise propagation model called SoundPLAN Essential 4.0 (SoundPLAN). SoundPLAN utilizes the same methods and algorithms as the Federal Highway Administration's Traffic Noise Model (TNM) to calculate noise impacts from traffic. Baseline traffic data collected on November 27, 2018 (discussed further in Section 3.9 of this EIR), and existing haul truck activity provided by the Operator (120 truck trips per day) were input into the SoundPLAN model to estimate background noise levels at haul route receptors. Table 3.8-5, "Baseline Noise Modeling Results at Transportation Noise Source Receptors," presents the modeled background noise levels at haul route receptors.

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SOURCE: Sespe, 2020

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Representative Receptors for Offsite Noise Analysis
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.8-2

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Table 3.8-5. Baseline Noise Modeling Results at Transportation Noise Source Receptors

Receptor	Receptor Type	Average Hour $L_{eq}1H^{A, B}$			CNEL
		Daytime	*Evening*	*Nighttime*	Outdoor
R4	Residence	53.2 dBA	34.6 dBA	25.6 dBA	50.3 dBA
R5-A	Residence(s)	59.9 dBA	53.8 dBA	49.8 dBA	59.7 dBA
R5-B	Residence(s)	60.2 dBA	54.7 dBA	50.6 dBA	60.3 dBA
R5-C	Residence(s)	60.8 dBA	55.4 dBA	52.1 dBA	61.3 dBA

Source: Sespe, 2020.
Notes:
A—Average Leq1H: Daytime = 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m., Evening = 7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m., Nighttime = 10:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.
B—CNEL = Sound levels measured during the evening hours (7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.) are weighted by +5 dBA and sound levels measured during the nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.) are weighted by +10 dBA.
C—Baseline noise levels shown were modeled in SoundPLAN Essential 4.0, using actual traffic data collected on 11/27/2018 and haul truck activity provided by the Operator.

When comparing the measured ambient noise levels in Table 3.8-4 to the modeled ambient noise levels in Table 3.8-5, the baseline noise levels modeled in SoundPLAN are lower than the ambient noise levels measured on January 23 and 24, 2019. This is primarily because the SoundPLAN model only considers noise generated by vehicles on affected roadways, and excludes any other ambient noise sources (e.g., agricultural activities, nearby commercial centers, etc.) that exist in the areas around R4 and R5. Because the focus of this traffic noise analysis is to determine the impacts of new haul truck activity during the evening and nighttime hours, using the modeled baseline values is more appropriate. This is also a more conservative approach, as the lower numbers determined within the model present a lower baseline by which Project impacts are compared to (i.e., lower baseline means a greater chance for Project impacts).

Non-Transportation (Onsite) Vibration Sources and Receptors

As discussed in Chapter 2, Project Description, existing mining operations at the site involve controlled blasting to lift and loosen exposed bedrock and the use of diesel-powered equipment to move these materials to sorting, processing, and stockpile areas. Blasting is occasional and the actual detonation duration is about 1 second. Primary blasts are conducted approximately twice a year. Smaller blasts are performed up to twice per week. In the Project Site vicinity, receptors R1, R2, and R3 would be the nearest vibration-sensitive uses to the blasting activity – although as shown in Figure 3.8-1, these receptors are located some distance away from the Project Site (i.e., distances to the proposed expanded mine boundary are: R1 - 1,160 feet, R2 - 943 feet, and R 3 - 390 feet). Under the proposed Project, no changes to the mining and blasting methods, processing methods, or mining and processing equipment are proposed.

Transportation (Offsite) Vibration Sources and Receptors

Sources of groundborne vibration in the Project site vicinity consist of vehicular travel (refuse trucks, haul trucks, delivery trucks, etc.) on local roadways. In the Project Site vicinity, receptors R4, R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C are located along the Project's truck travel route. Rubber-tired vehicles traveling on typical roadways generate groundborne vibration velocity levels of approximately 60 to 65 VdB (up to approximately 0.0068 in/sec PPV) at a distance of 50 feet. According to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual, rubber-tire vehicles rarely create ground-borne vibration problems unless there is a discontinuity or bump in the road that causes the vibration and there are vibration-sensitive buildings or activities in proximity.

3.8.1.3 Regulatory Framework

The regulatory setting consists of the Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020), Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (Ventura County, 2011), Ventura County Construction Noise Threshold Criteria and Control Plan (Ventura County, 2010), as well as applicable California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and FTA guidance documents.

Ventura County General Plan Noise Element

Goal HAZ-9 of the Hazards and Safety Element of the "Ventura County 2040 General Plan" (Ventura County, 2020) is, "To protect the health, safety, and general welfare of county residents by striving to eliminate or avoid the adverse noise impacts on existing and future noise sensitive uses." General Plan policies associated with noise potentially applicable to the Project are identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR.

Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines

The Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) present methodologies for measuring noise levels and determining if the associated impacts are significant. Significance thresholds depend on ambient noise levels in the area of the project during each applicable time periods. If ambient levels are less than the thresholds, then the "fixed" thresholds are used. If ambient levels are greater than the fixed thresholds, then the "ambient noise +3 decibels (dB)" is used as the significance threshold.

The vibration thresholds referenced in the ISAG are from the Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual (Federal Transit Administration, 2018), and apply to frequent vibration events from transportation sources (i.e., highways, rail lines, etc.), not blasting events. Therefore, the Caltrans vibration thresholds described below are utilized to determine the significance of infrequent vibration impacts resulting from blasting events.

California Department of Transportation

The Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual (California Department of Transportation, 2013) includes a chapter (Chapter 11) about blasting impacts assessment. In the absence of an established, local blasting vibration significance threshold guidance, criteria in the Caltrans manual are used to determine the significance of groundborne vibration.

Neighboring City Requirements

The Project site is located in unincorporated Ventura County, but has the potential to generate impacts at receptors located within the nearby cities of Camarillo and Thousand Oaks. Specifically, residential receptors R2 and open space/trails receptor R3 to the east of the site are located within the City of Thousand Oaks, receptors R1 and R4 are in unincorporated Ventura County, and residential receptors R5 are within the City of Camarillo.

The Thousand Oaks General Plan Noise Element (City of Thousand Oaks, 2000) includes land use planning standards for noise which are based on a sliding scale of impacts, where for low-density residential, 55 dBA CNEL is "clearly acceptable," 60 dBA CNEL is "normally acceptable," 65 dBA CNEL is "conditionally acceptable," and 75 dBA CNEL is "normally unacceptable." The Camarillo General Plan Noise Element (City of Camarillo, 2015) also includes similar sliding scale noise criteria. Specifically, for low-density residential, 60 dBA CNEL is "normally acceptable," 70 dBA CNEL is "conditionally acceptable," and 75 dBA CNEL is "normally unacceptable."

The Camarillo Municipal Code also contains specific noise regulations (Chapter 10.34). The Municipal Code includes significance thresholds for daytime (7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.) and nighttime (9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) that are identical to the Ventura County Noise Element thresholds for these same time periods. The only differences are the Municipal Code lacks a separate evening (7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.) standard, and the daytime period begins one hour later (7:00 a.m.) while the nighttime period begins one hour earlier (9:00 p.m.) compared to the Noise Element standards.

3.8.2 Impact Analysis

3.8.2.1 Significance Thresholds

The analysis for noise and vibration impacts considers noise criteria identified in the CEQA Guidelines Appendix G and applies Ventura County General Plan standards as significance thresholds for the various potential noise and vibration impacts of the Project. The following sections describe the criteria and thresholds used for the analysis.

CEQA Guidelines

The Environmental Checklist in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the following criteria for consideration of potential noise and vibration impacts:

a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies;
b) Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels; or
c) For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

Regarding item c, above, the Project site is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or within 2.0 miles of any public airports or public airstrips. Thus, the Project would have no potential for impacts associated with this item and the item has been eliminated from further consideration.

Ventura County General Plan Significance Thresholds

As previously discussed, Ventura County has adopted various guidelines, requirements and policies related to noise. Applicable Ventura County noise criteria are utilized to address CEQA Checklist item "a." Specifically, the Ventura County 2040 General Plan Hazards and Safety Element Noise section policy HAZ-9.2 includes the following standards relevant for noise impact significance thresholds for this EIR:

1. New noise sensitive uses proposed to be located near highways, truck routes, heavy industrial activities and other relatively continuous noise sources shall incorporate noise control measures so that indoor noise levels in habitable rooms do not exceed Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) 45 and outdoor noise levels do not exceed CNEL 60 or $L_{eq}1H$ of 65 dB(A) during any hour.
4. Noise generators, proposed to be located near any noise sensitive use, shall incorporate noise control measures so that ongoing outdoor noise levels received by the noise sensitive receptor, measured at the exterior wall of the building, does not exceed any of the following standards:
    a. $L_{eq}1H$ of 55 dB(A) or ambient noise level plus 3 dB(A), whichever is greater, during any hour from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

b. L_{eq}1H of 50 dB(A) or ambient noise level plus 3 dB(A), whichever is greater, during any hour from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

c. Le_q1H of 45 dB(A) or ambient noise level plus 3 dB(A), whichever is greater, during any hour from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

The standards at Item 1, above, are primarily intended to be applied to new sensitive receptors (e.g., schools, residences, etc.) located next to existing noise sources (i.e., roads, railroads, highways). However, as previously discussed, these standards may also appropriately be applied to projects that cause new traffic noise impacts to existing sensitive receptors. When assessing haul truck noise impacts over the course of a full operating day (e.g., 10.5- hours, 24-hours, etc.), the CNEL standard of Item 1, above, is more appropriate than the L_{eq} (1H) standard, which only assesses noise impacts within a 1-hour timeframe. The CNEL standard also applies penalties to noise generated during the evening and nighttime hours, when receptors would be most sensitive to noise generated by new haul truck operations. Therefore, the CNEL standard is utilized to determine the significance of noise impacts resulting from Project haul truck activity (i.e., transportation sources). Conversely, the L_{eq} (1H) standards in Item 4, above, are more appropriate for the inconsistent noises generated by industrial equipment and activity sources at the site (e.g., mining equipment, aggregate and recycle material processing). For these reasons, the CNEL criteria presented in Item 1 is applied to transportation receptors located near the Project haul route (R4 and R5), and the daytime, evening, and nighttime L_{eq} (1H) criteria presented in Item 4 are applied to non-transportation receptors located near the Project site (R1, R2, and R3).

Additionally, the General Plan noise standards apply to "sensitive uses", which are defined as "residences; schools; historic sites; cemeteries; parks, recreation, and open space areas; hospitals and care facilities; sensitive wildlife habitats, including the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered species; hotels and other short-term lodging (e.g., bed and breakfasts, and motels); places of worship; and libraries" (Ventura County, 2020; pg. 7-23).

In general, noise level changes of less than 3 dBA are not perceptible, and therefore 3+ dBA is commonly considered a "substantial increase" for the purposes of environmental noise impact assessment. This concept is used in Item 4 of the County General Plan noise standards to account for receptors where the background noise exceeds the specified "fixed" criteria. Similarly, ambient plus 3+ dBA is also considered the significance criteria for General Plan noise standard Item 1 when the background CNEL noise levels exceed the specified standard. Thus, significance criteria based on the General Plan noise standards are summarized in Table 3.8-6, "Ventura County Noise Criteria."

Table 3.8-6. Ventura County Noise Criteria

Industrial Source (Non-Transportation) Criteria			Traffic Source (Transportation) Criteria	
Time Period	***Hours***	***Threshold L_{eq}(1H)***	***Outdoor***	***Indoor***
Daytime	6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.	55 dBA or ambient +3 dBA	CNEL = 60 dBA or ambient +3 dBA L_{eq} (1H) = 65 dBA or ambient +3 dBA	CNEL = 45 dBA or ambient +3 dBA
Evening	7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.	50 dBA or ambient +3 dBA		
Nighttime	10:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m.	45 dBA or ambient +3 dBA		

Source: Ventura County, 2020.

Referring to monitoring results presented in Table 3.8-3, the ambient noise levels at the non-transportation noise source receptors (R1, R2 and R3) are less than the applicable 1-hour (Leq1H) "fixed thresholds" for the daytime, evening, and nighttime periods. Therefore, the "fixed thresholds" are utilized to determine the significance of Project noise impacts at these receptors using the non-transportation significance criteria shown in Table 3.8-7, "Non-Transportation Significance Criteria."

Table 3.8-7. Non-Transportation Significance Criteria

Daytime (6 am - 7 pm) $L_{eq}1H$	Evening (7 pm – 10 pm) $L_{eq}1H$	Nighttime (10 pm – 6 am) $L_{eq}1H$
55.0 dBA	50.0 dBA	45.0 dBA

Source: Venture County, 2020.

For the Project haul route receptors R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C, modeled ambient noise levels shown in Table 3.8-4 exceed the outdoor "fixed threshold" of 60 dBA CNEL. Therefore, per Ventura County guidance, the ambient noise levels "+3 dBA" is used to determine the significance of the Project's outdoor noise impacts at haul route receptors R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C. These adjusted significance criteria for receptors R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C are summarized in Table 3.8-8, "Transportation Noise Source Significance Criteria," below. The modeled ambient outdoor noise level at receptor R4 was below the applicable "fixed" CNEL thresholds. Therefore, the "fixed thresholds" of 60 dBA CNEL is utilized to determine the significance of Project haul truck noise impacts at receptor R4.

Table 3.8-8. Transportation Noise Source Significance Criteria

Receptor	Receptor Type	Outdoor CNEL
R4	Residence	60.0 dBA
R5-A	Residence(s)	62.7 dBA
R5-B	Residence(s)	63.3 dBA
R5-C	Residence(s)	64.3 dBA

Source: Venture County, 2020; Sespe, 2020.

Neighboring Cities Noise Standards

The Project site and receptors R1 and R4 are located in unincorporated Ventura County. However, residential receptor R2 and open space/trails receptor R3 is in the City of Thousand Oaks and receptors R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C are in the City of Camarillo. Noise standards for these two cities and their applicability to this analysis are discussed here.

The City of Thousand Oaks General Plan Noise Element (City of Thousand Oaks, 2000) and City of Camarillo General Plan Noise Element (City of Camarillo, 2015) include land use planning standards for noise based on a sliding scale of impacts. These standards are identical to the sliding scale found in the Ventura County General Plan land-use compatibility chart. Since the Ventura County Noise Element noise criteria are identical to criteria in the Thousand Oaks and Camarillo general plans, the Ventura County standards are used for this analysis to determine significance of noise impacts at all of the receptors, including those within the two cities. Additionally, the County 1-hour ($L_{eq}1H$) criteria during the daytime, evening, and nighttime periods is more stringent than the 24-hour CNEL standards, and is therefore

conservative in comparison (i.e., impacts that do not exceed the Ventura County $L_{eq}1H$ thresholds would not exceed the CNEL thresholds in the Thousand Oaks or Camarillo General Plan Noise Elements).

The Camarillo Municipal Code also contains specific noise regulations (Chapter 10.34). As some of the Project haul route receptors (i.e., R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C) are located within the Camarillo city limits, the city's Municipal Code noise regulation are relevant for consideration. The Camarillo Municipal Code includes noise level limits for daytime (7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.) and nighttime (9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) that are identical to the Ventura County Noise Element thresholds for similar time periods (55 dBA and 45 dBA respectively). However, the Camarillo Municipal Code does not have a separate evening (7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.) standard and the city code daytime period begins one hour later (7:00 a.m.) while the nighttime period begins one hour earlier (9:00 p.m.) compared to the periods in the Ventura County Noise Element standards. Due to the inclusion of a separate evening standard/penalty the Ventura County thresholds are more stringent than the Municipal Code. Furthermore, because the residential receptor(s) located within the City of Camarillo are haul route receptors (i.e., R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C), and exposed to relatively continuous noise sources, the 24-hour CNEL Noise Element significance threshold is more appropriately applied. For this reason, the Ventura County Noise Element CNEL thresholds shown in Table 3.8-8 are utilized to determine Project impacts at haul route receptors.

Vibration Criteria and Significance Thresholds

The primary source of Project-related vibration impacts is associated with periodic and short-term blasting associated with mining in the proposed expansion areas. Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines identifies "generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels" as a criterion for assessing vibration impacts. The Ventura County ISAG references vibration thresholds in the FTA's Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual (Federal Transit Administration, 2018). The FTA thresholds are meant to be applied to transit sources that occur frequently throughout the day. With respect to transit sources, the FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual (Federal Transit Administration, 2018) states that vibration impact from rubber-tired vehicles is unlikely and no further analysis is needed unless the following three conditions apply: (1) travel occurs on roadways with irregularities, such as expansion joints, speed bumps, or other design features that result in unevenness in the road surface that can result in perceptible ground-borne vibration within 75 feet; (2) travel occurs within 100 feet of vibration-sensitive buildings that have vibration-sensitive activities defined as research that uses electron microscopes or manufacturing of computer chips; or (3) vehicles that operate within buildings such as bus stations located inside an office building complex. Under the Project, up to 60 loads of material would be permitted to be hauled from or to the site each day for a total of 120 daily haul truck trips, which is the same number of trucks allowed under existing operations. These rubber-tired trucks would travel on paved typical roadways and highways and elevated vibration levels would not be anticipated. In addition, these trucks would not be routed near vibration-sensitive buildings that have vibration-sensitive activities and would not operate within off-site buildings unrelated to the Project. Therefore, per the FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual, vibration impact from Project haul trucks which would be rubber-tired vehicles is not reasonably foreseeable and no further analysis is needed.

Transit sources of elevated vibration levels near vibration-sensitive buildings or activities have a higher potential to cause structural damage and annoyance as compared to the less frequent and short-duration (about 1-second) blasting events that would be associated with the Project. Therefore, to evaluate the Project's potential for vibration impacts from blasting activities, blasting-specific vibration thresholds based on the "Caltrans Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual" (California Department of Transportation, 2013) are used to determine the significance of Project blasting vibration.

Two types of vibration impacts are considered: structural damage and annoyance. The structural damage thresholds are intended to prevent damage to structures while annoyance thresholds are intended to prevent annoyance to nearby residents. Table 3.8-9, "Vibration Structure Damage," lists example vibration levels from common activities and vibration levels at which structural damage could occur based on the Caltrans "Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual" (Caltrans, 2013). As shown in the table, structural damage is not expected at vibration levels as measured by peak particle velocity (PPV) of less than 2.0 inches per second (in/sec). Thus, a PVV of 2.0 in/sec is conservatively used as the structural damage threshold for this analysis. Predicted Project-related vibration levels of 2.0 in/sec or higher at a residential or other structure is considered a significant impact.

Table 3.8-9. Vibration Structure Damage

Category	PPV (in/sec)
Equivalent to jumping on the floor	0.3
Equivalent to door slam	0.5
Equivalent to nail driving	0.9
No damage to a residential structure	<2.0
Probable damage to a residential structure	>4.0

Source: Sespe, 2020. (California Department of Transportation, 2013, Table 22).
Notes:
PPV = peak particle velocity
in/sec = inches per second

Table 3.8-10, "Human Response to Blasting Vibration," provides a summary of the typical human response to blasting based on the Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual (Caltrans, 2013). The Transportation and Construction Vibration Guidance Manual indicates that "while a blaster can quite easily design his blasts to stay well below any vibration or air overpressure levels that could cause damage, it is virtually impossible to design blasts that are not perceptible by people in the vicinity." In recognizing the difference between *perceptibility* and *annoyance*, it is not appropriate to adopt a threshold of perceptibly to determine the significance of periodic short-term blasting events associated with the Project. Although individual responses to vibration vary, this analysis conservatively uses the "strongly perceptible" PPV level of 0.50 in/sec to determine significance of annoyance associated with Project-related blasting. Thus, predicted Project vibration levels of 0.5 in/sec or higher at a residential or other sensitive receptor location is considered a significant impact.

Table 3.8-10. Human Response to Blasting Vibration

Average Human Response	PPV (in/sec)
Barely to distinctly perceptible	0.02 - 0.10
Distinctly to strongly perceptible	0.10 - 0.50
Strongly perceptible to mildly unpleasant	0.50 – 1.00
Mildly to distinctly unpleasant	1.00 – 2.00
Distinctly unpleasant to intolerable	2.00 – 10.00

Source: Sespe, 2020. (California Department of Transportation, 2013, Table 21)
Notes:
PPV = peak particle velocity/in/sec = inches per second

3.8.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact NV-1: Onsite mining, processing, and reclamation activities could result in noise levels at residential and noise-sensitive locations that exceed applicable standards. (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Onsite activities associated with the Project would include ongoing mining and aggregate processing, receiving and processing concrete and asphalt for recycling, and import and placement of fill for reclamation activities. The existing mining area would expand over time and increased annual production and throughput would be permitted. Onsite truck loading would be permitted to occur during extended operational hours – 5:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. seven days per week with 24-hour operation up to 60 days per week under the proposed Project as compared to the currently permitted operational hours of 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Predicted Project-generated noise levels at the various receiver locations are presented and compared to the applicable significance thresholds in Table 3.8-11, "Predicted Noise Levels from Onsite Activities and Impact Significance Prior to Mitigation," below. The total Project noise levels presented in the table represents the combined worst-case noise levels predicted for each receptor due to operation of on-site equipment sources operating simultaneously within a given hour. Onsite noise sources evaluated are those associated with mining (excluding blasting), including a front-end loader, excavator, rock drill, dozer, and water truck, operation of the aggregate and recycle processing plants, and unloading and loading of haul trucks. Since blasting activities are occasional and very short in duration (about 1-second), they do not have any substantial effect on the noise environment in the area. Blasting would continue to occur during daytime operating hours only (7:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.), and in the same manner as currently conducted under baseline conditions; thus, no additional blasting noise impacts are anticipated as a result of the Project. (Blasting vibration impacts are further evaluated and addressed separately at Impact NV-3.)

Where line-of-site between receptor and noise source is blocked, a -10 dBA attenuation was applied. Appendix E includes three figures (Figures 4A, 4B, and 4C) illustrating line-of-site between receptors R2-A, R2-B, and R2-C and R3, respectively. As shown in the figures, receptors R2-A, R2-C, and R3 do not have direct line-of-sight to the Project site. Thus, a -10 dBA attenuation is applied at R2-A, R2-C, and R3 due to the intervening topography. As shown on Appendix E Figure 4B, Receptor R2-B is expected to have direct line-of-sight to three portions of the proposed mine expansion areas (areas identified as LoS-A, -B, and -C on Figure 4B of Appendix E). As shown on Appendix E Figure 5, "R2-B Line-of-Sight Distances", the nearest mining area with direct line-of-sight to Receptor 2-B (LoS-A) is approximately 1,625-feet distant. Mobile excavation equipment operating within the LoS-A area would produce worst-case noise impacts at R2-B and is therefore used in the analysis to determine the significance of impacts at receptor R2-B. A -10 dBA attenuation factor was also applied to aggregate processing and recycle processing noise predictions at receptors R2-A, R2-B, R2-C, and R3 due to terrain blocking line-of-sight between the aggregate and recycle processing facilities and these four receptors. Receptor R1 is assumed to have direct line-of-sight to the majority of the site, including mining and processing areas (including both the aggregate plant and recycle plant locations as shown on Figure 3.8-1), thus, no attenuation factor is applied to predicted noise levels at this receptor.

Table 3.8-11. Predicted Noise Levels from Onsite Activities and Impact Significance Prior to Mitigation

Parameter	Receptor				
	R1	***R2-A***	***R2-B***	***R2-C***	***R3***
Baseline Noise Level (dBA):	41.6	44.8	44.8	44.8	44.8
Mobile Excavation Equipment Noise Impacts					
Distance to Equipment Source (feet)[C]:	1,160	1,161	1,652	943	390
Noise Reduction due to Shielding (dBA):	---	-10	---	-10	-10
Equipment Noise Level (L_{eq}1H) @ Receptor (dBA):	59.8	49.8	56.7	51.6	59.2
Aggregate Plant Noise Impacts					
Distance to Equipment Source (feet):	2,474	2,728	2,781	2,703	2,201
Noise Reduction due to Shielding (dBA):	---	-10	-10	-10	-10
Equipment Noise Level (L_{eq}1H) @ Receptor (dBA):	55.2	39.4	39.2	3.94	41.2
Recycle Plant Noise Impacts					
Distance to Equipment Source (feet):	1,833	2,547	2,688	2,580	1,955
Noise Reduction due to Shielding (dBA):	---	-10	-10	-10	-10
Equipment Noise Level (L_{eq}1H) @ Receptor (dBA):	52.8	40.0	39.5	39.8	42.3
Combined Noise Level (Leq1H) @ Receptor (dBA)[B]:	**61.0**	**51.6**	**57.1**	**52.8**	**59.6**
Applicable Significance Thresholds (dBA)[A]:					
Daytime	**55**	**55**	**55**	**55**	**55**
Evening	**50**	**50**	**50**	**50**	**50**
Nighttime	**45**	**45**	**45**	**45**	**45**
Significant (without mitigation)?:					
Daytime	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**
Evening	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**
Nighttime	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**	**Yes**

Source: Sespe, 2020.

Notes:

A – Significance threshold shown are the Ventura County General Plan and ISAG "fixed" noise standards for daytime hours (6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.), evening hours (7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.), and nighttime hours (10:00 p.m. – 6:00 a.m.). As proposed, on-site operations would occur during daytime and evening hours, and early morning hours that fall in the nighttime category (i.e., 5:30 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.), and therefore the daytime, evening, and nighttime L_{eq}1H criteria applies.

B – The total Project noise level represents the combined worst-case noise level predicted at each receptor due to operation of on-site equipment sources (i.e., mobile excavation equipment, existing aggregate plant, and proposed recycle plant) operating simultaneously within a given hour.

C – The mining area with direct line-of-sight to R2-B is approximately 1,652 feet away. Mobile excavation equipment operating within this area (i.e., LoS-A) will produce worst-case noise impacts at R2-B and is therefore utilized to determine the significance of impacts.

As shown in Table 3.8-11, the predicted peak-hour Project noise levels (L_{eq}1H) exceed the evening and nighttime significance thresholds at all receptor locations, and also exceed the daytime significance thresholds at receptors R1, R2-B, and R3. Therefore, unmitigated noise impacts at R1, R2-B, and R3 due to onsite sources are considered significant during the daytime and noise impacts at R1, R2-A, R2-B, and R2-C, and R3 due to onsite sources are considered significant during the evening and nighttime. It is relevant to note that the methodology used for this analysis predicts conservative worst-case Project noise impacts by assuming simultaneous onsite activities and by assuming noise generating activities at their nearest point to receptor locations and including concurrent operation of the aggregate plant and the recycle plant. During most periods of operation, noise levels are expected to be less than those calculated within this analysis and distances to receptors would be greater. Nevertheless, this impact is considered significant due to the predicted exceedance of the applicable thresholds. Thus, mitigation must be considered for this impact.

Mitigation measure MM NV-1, provided below, requires mining and processing activities to be limited to the hours of 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. which would avoid the potential for evening and nighttime impacts at all receptor locations, and requires the use of properly fitting mufflers, limited idling times for equipment, prohibition of concurrent operation of the aggregate and recycle plans, prohibition of aggregate plant and recycle plant operations when mining occurring within 1,600 feet of the Conejo Mountain Funeral Home, and noise monitoring and other measures to ensure noise levels during the daytime would not exceed County standards and thresholds of significance.

Table 3.8-12, "Mitigated Daytime Noise Levels from Onsite Activities," presents the predicted noise levels and resulting significance with implementation of MM NV-1.

The mitigated noise levels for excavation equipment per MM NV-1(2) and MM NV-1(3) are based on the EPA's Noise from Construction Equipment and Operations, Building Equipment, and Home Appliances, which notes that installation of a manufacturer's "improved muffler" on each equipment's "exhaust" would result in a "probable noise reduction" of -10 dBA. The EPA document also notes these quieter equipment noise levels are obtainable by "implementing noise control features requiring no major redesign or extreme cost." Since the exhaust stack is considered the dominant noise component on the front-end loader, dozer, and excavator, a -10 dBA reduction is assumed for these pieces of equipment due to the installation of an improved muffler. For the rock drill and water truck, conservatively it is assumed this control measure would achieve a -5 dBA noise reduction, as the exhaust stack represents one of the main sources of noise for these equipment pieces. The other main sources of noise include the rock drill itself in contact with the rock material and the water spray equipment on the water truck. Use of an improved muffler is also presented in the Ventura County Construction Guidelines as a feasible mitigation option, which states using "quieter methods or equipment and implementing feasible noise controls" can reduce equipment noise impacts. The Ventura County Construction Guidelines includes the EPA's mitigated equipment noise levels by reference. Appendix E provides Ventura County/EPA mitigation references, mitigated equipment noise levels, and mitigated noise impact calculations. MM NV-1(4) further reduces potential daytime operational noise levels by prohibiting concurrent operation of the aggregate plant and the recycle plant.

Even with implementation of MM NV-1(2), MM NV-1(3), and MM NV-1(4), daytime noise levels at receptor R1 could still exceed the daytime threshold during periods of concurrent operations of mobile equipment and operation of the aggregate plant or recycle plant. Sespe (2020) propagation calculations show that Project noise impacts at receptor R1 would be below the daytime significance threshold if neither the aggregate plant nor the recycle plant is operated concurrent with mining equipment operating within 1,600-feet of receptor R1. Therefore, MM NV-1(5) requires that neither the aggregate plant nor the recycle plant be operated when excavation is occurring within 1,600 feet of R1.

As shown in Table 3.8-12, with implementation of mitigation measure MM NV-1, onsite noise sources are predicted to have a less than significant impact at each of the receptor locations considered for the onsite noise analysis.

Table 3.8-12. Mitigated Daytime Noise Levels from Onsite Activities

Receptor	Unmitigated Noise Level (L_{eq}1H) @ Receptor (dBA)[A]	Mitigated Noise Level (L_{eq}1H) @ Receptor (dBA)	Ventura County Significance Criteria (dBA)[B]	Significant with Mitigation?
R1	61.0	54.9	55	No
R2-A	51.6	47.8	55	No
R2-B	57.1	51.4	55	No
R2-C	52.8	48.5	55	No
R3	59.5	53.5	55	No

Source: Sespe, 2019c.
Notes:
A – Prior to mitigation, noise impacts at R2-A and R2-C were shown to be below the applicable significance thresholds due to intervening topography (see Table 3.8-11). However, since the proposed mitigation measures would apply to all excavation equipment, the mitigated noise levels at these receptors are also shown here for informational purposes.
B – Significance threshold shown is Ventura County General Plan noise standard for daytime hours (6:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.).

Following the cessation of mining (in portions of or the entire site), site reclamation activities would generate noise. As described in Chapter 2, "Project Description," Site reclamation would include re-vegetating the bench surfaces with native species compatible with the surrounding area and re-vegetating the floor with an agricultural grazing crop to support cattle. Heavy equipment assumed to be used on a peak day includes a backhoe, dozer and wheeled loader. The existing facility currently utilizes an excavator, dozer, loader, haul truck, and screening and crushing plant. Site reclamation is anticipated to utilize a similar or fewer number of equipment. Therefore, construction equipment noise associated with site reclamation activities would be similar to or less than the maximum emissions generated during operation of the facility from mining, processing, haul truck loading, and hauling. As discussed above, noise impacts would be potentially significant and mitigation measures would be required. With implementation of mitigation, noise impacts would be reduced to less than significant. Site reclamation activities would be short-term, would not contribute to the long-term noise environment, and would cease once reclamation is completed.

Mitigation for Impact NV-1:

MM NV-1: *The Permittee shall comply with the following onsite noise reduction measures:*

1. *Excavation, materials processing and recycling, and reclamation activities shall be restricted to occur during daytime operation hours (7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) only.*
2. *Excavation and reclamation equipment (loader, dozer, excavator, rock drill, water truck) shall be fitted with an approved manufacturer's improved exhaust muffler.*
3. *Excavation and reclamation equipment, including the drill rig, shall not idle for more than 30 minutes at any one time.*
4. *The aggregate plant and the recycle plant shall not be operated concurrently at any time.*
5. *Neither the aggregate plant nor the recycle plant shall operate when excavation activities are occurring within 1,600 feet of receptor R1 (i.e., the Conejo Mountain Funeral Home).*
6. *The predicted noise impacts associated with on-site excavation and reclamation equipment shall be verified with noise level measurements upon commencement of mining activities within line-of-sight of receptors R1 and R2-B. Concurrent with initiation of Project-related activities within the line-of-sight*

of R1 and or R2-B, the Permittee shall cause a qualified acoustician to conduct noise measurements at R1 or R2-B. If measured noise levels exceed 55 dBA at R1 or R2-B, activities within the line-of-site of the respective receptor shall cease and shall not resume unless and until such time as the Permittee identifies additional noise control measures with analysis indicating that such measures are sufficient to avoid operational noise in excess of 55 dBA at the respective receptor and until receiving written authorization by the County that such operations may resume. The Permittee shall comply with the requirements of this measure for any subsequent resumed or newly initiated Project-related operations within line-of-sight of receptor R1 or R2-B.

Impact NV-2: Offsite materials hauling could result in noise levels at residential and other noise-sensitive locations that exceed applicable standards. (Less than Significant)

The Project would generated noise from offsite activities associated with vehicles to and from the site associated with worker transportation, export of aggregate produced onsite, delivery of recycle asphalt and concrete to the site for recycling, delivery of soil to the site for use as backfill for reclamation, and other service and delivery trips to the site. Up to 60 loads of material would be permitted to be hauled from or to the site each day for a total of 120 daily haul truck trips. Project traffic noise impacts on affected road segments of Howard Road, Pancho Road, and Pleasant Valley Road were modeled using SoundPLAN Essential computer software, and modeling details regarding the transportation noise model used in this impact assessment are provided in Appendix E.

Appendix E Figure 6, "Traffic Noise Model – Baseline CNEL (24-Hour)," and Figure 7, "Traffic Noise Model – Project CNEL (24-Hour)," display the results of the baseline and Project-related road noise model, respectively. The SoundPLAN Essential model was used to calculate the baseline CNEL noise levels at Receptors R4 and R5 located along the haul route. Total traffic count was modeled with SoundPLAN by combining the traffic counts conducted for the "Pacific Rock Quarry Expansion Project Transportation Impact Study" (VRPA, 2020) included as Appendix F of this EIR with estimated average hourly haul truck activity from existing quarry operations at the site. Specifically, SoundPLAN estimates that the existing daily truck trips (120 truck trips per day) would be spread evenly throughout the current operating day hours (i.e., average of 13 truck trips/daytime hour). Per the existing CUP, haul truck activity is limited to occur between 7:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. only.

While the daily number of haul truck trips would not change from existing permitted levels (i.e., 60 loads per day, 120 truck trips per day), the time period truck trips may occur would change. Specifically, allowing proposed 24-hour haul truck activity. The Project was modeled in SoundPLAN Essential assuming that all truck trips occur evenly throughout the evening (7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.) and nighttime (10:00 p.m. – 7:00 a.m.) hours (i.e., average of 5 truck trips per evening/nighttime hour). This is conservative, as the CNEL noise metric adds the greatest penalty/weight to noise generated during these time periods (+5 dBA for evening noise, +10 dBA for nighttime noise).

Table 3.8-13, "Predicted Noise Levels from Offsite Vehicle Operation and Impact Significance," summarizes the predicted cumulative CNEL noise levels experienced by the Project haul route Receptors R4, R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C under the baseline (i.e., existing quarry operations at the site and existing haul truck trips) and Project conditions. Haul truck noise impacts are below the applicable Ventura County Noise Element significance criteria. Therefore, noise impacts from traffic sources are less than significant.

Table 3.8-13. Predicted Noise Levels from Offsite Vehicle Operation and Impact Significance

Parameter	R4 (CNEL – dBA)	R5-A (CNEL – dBA)	R5-B (CNEL – dBA)	R5-C (CNEL – dBA)
Baseline Outdoor Noise Level	50.3	59.7	60.3	61.3
With-Project Outdoor Noise Level	55.2	61.1	61.4	61.6
Significance Threshold [1]	60.0	62.7	63.3	64.3
Significant?	No	No	No	No

Source: Sespe, 2019c

Notes:

1. The significance threshold for R4 is based on Ventura County Noise Regulations where outdoor noise levels do not exceed 60 dBA CNEL. For R5-A, R5-B, and R5-C, the significance thresholds are based on a +3 dBA CNEL increase above the baseline noise level.

Mitigation for Impact NV-2

No mitigation required.

Impact NV-3: Project blasting could result in groundborne vibration at residential and other sensitive locations that exceed applicable structural damage or annoyance thresholds. (Less than Significant)

The Project would result in ongoing blasting at the site performed similarly to blasting performed under existing/baseline conditions. However, due to the expanded mining area proposed by the Project, blasting in some areas of the site would be nearer to receptor locations that under existing conditions. Under the proposed Project, blasting would continue to be conducted during the daytime hours of 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. as with existing operations. Total vibration impacts from blasting activities are determined utilizing the International Society of Explosives Engineers Blasters' Handbook, 17th Edition (International Society of Explosives Engineers, 1998), assuming the closest distance between the blasts and the receptors. Appendix E provides the detailed modeling calculations used for this analysis.

Predicted vibration levels at receptors R1, R2, and R3 resulting from blasting at the location nearest to each receptor are presented and compared to the applicable significance threshold in Table 3.8-14, "Predicted Blasting Vibration Levels and Significance Determinations." Because the predicted vibration levels are for the location nearest the receptors, vibration levels when blasting occurs farther from the receptors would be less that those shown in the table. As shown in Table 3.8-14, the peak blasting vibration levels associated with the Project would only slightly increase at receptors R1, R2-A, R2-B, and R2-C above the threshold of perception (i.e., 0.02 in/sec) and would be well below the impact significance thresholds for potential building damage for residential structures and annoyance. Peak blasting vibration levels at receptor R3, which represents the open space and trails east of the Project site, are predicted to be up to 0.492 PPV. Although these vibration levels may be perceptible, they would be below the annoyance impact threshold of 0.50 PPV. Therefore, Project-related groundborne vibration impacts associated with blasting would be less than significant.

Table 3.8-14. Predicted Blasting Vibration Levels and Significance Determinations

Receptor	Predicted Project Vibration – PPV (in/sec)	Structure Damage Threshold – PPV (in/sec)	Significant per Structure Damage Threshold?	Annoyance Threshold – PPV (in/sec)	Significant per Annoyance Threshold?
Receptor 1	0.086	2.0	**No**	0.5	**No**
Receptor 2-A	0.086	2.0	**No**	0.5	**No**
Receptor 2-B	0.05	2.0	**No**	0.5	**No**
Receptor 2-C	0.12	2.0	**No**	0.5	**No**
Receptor 3	0.492	2.0	**No**	0.50	**No**

Source: Sespe, 2020.

Mitigation for Impact NV-3

No mitigation required.

3.8.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative Noise Impacts

The geographic context for the analysis of cumulative noise impacts depends on the impact being analyzed. Noise is by definition a localized phenomenon, and sound reduces significantly in magnitude as the distance from the source increases. As such, only projects expected to occur in the immediate Project area likely would contribute to cumulative noise impacts. As discussed in Section 3.1.5, the nearest County of Ventura pending or recently approved project is CUP PL17-0062, which allows for temporary events (specifically outdoor wedding events) and is located at 1735 Pancho Road. Wedding and similar events are limited to Saturdays and Sundays, from 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., for a maximum of 35 days within any given calendar year. This location is over approximately 2,500 feet to the west of the Project site; over approximately 1,600 feet to the northwest of receptor R1; approximately 6,000 feet northwest of receptors R2 and R3; over 2,000 feet south of receptor R4; and over 7,400 feet south of receptor R5. At these distances, noise from the Project site would not incrementally contribute to cumulative noise impacts when considered with Conditional Use Permit PL17-0062. There are no other County of Ventura pending or recently approved projects in the Project site area. Therefore, the Project would not result in cumulative noise impacts from on-site sources of noise.

The Project could contribute to cumulative traffic noise impacts from Project-related vehicle operation on local roadways due to the Project and other projects in the Project vicinity. As discussed above, Conditional Use Permit PL17-0062, located at 1735 Pancho Road, allows for temporary events (specifically outdoor wedding events) limited to Saturdays and Sundays, from 12:00 PM to 10:00 PM, for a maximum of 35 days within any given calendar year. Vehicle traffic associated with CUP PL17-0062 would be dominated by passenger vehicles, which would not generate a substantial increase in traffic noise. Cumulative traffic-generated noise impacts from the Project is based on the contribution of the Project to the future cumulative base traffic volumes in the Project vicinity. As relevant to the hours of operation for permitted CUP PL17-0062 use on Saturdays and Sundays between 12:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., the Project would result in the potential for Project-related trips and associated increased traffic noise levels between 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. on Saturdays (trips are currently permitted before 4 p.m. on Saturdays) and between 12:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. on Sunday (trips are not currently permitted on Sundays). As shown in Table 3.8-12, haul truck noise impacts would be below the applicable Ventura County Noise Element significance criteria for the Project haul route Receptors R4 and R5. Given the Project's less than significant traffic-noise impact and

the limited potential of traffic noise impacts associated with CUP PL17-0062, the Project would not substantially contribute to cumulative noise impacts when considered with Conditional Use Permit PL17-0062. Therefore, the Project would not result in cumulatively considerable noise impacts from traffic on local roadway.

Cumulative Vibration Impacts

Blasting associated with the Project would result in a less than significant impact associated with blasting vibration. The nearest County of Ventura pending or recently approved project identified in Section 3.1.5 is CUP PL17-0062, which allows for temporary events (specifically outdoor wedding events) and is located at 1735 Pancho Road. Temporary outdoor wedding events are not associated with activities that would generate substantial vibration levels in the area. As discussed above, this location over approximately 1,600 feet from the nearest receptor. At these distances, vibration from the Project site would not incrementally contribute to cumulative vibration impacts when considered with CUP PL17-0062. No other County of Ventura pending or recently approved projects in the Project area have been identified. Therefore, the Project would not result in a cumulatively considerable vibration impact.

3.8.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies, including those associated with noise and vibration, is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

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SECTION 3.9 – TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

SECTION 3.9–TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

This section provides an evaluation of potential transportation-related impacts of the Project. A "Pacific Rock Quarry Expansion Project Transportation Impact Study" (TIS) (VRPA, 2020) was prepared for the Project, and provides supporting information for this section. The TIS is included as Appendix F-1 of this EIR.

The TIS includes an evaluation of the Project effects on traffic delay on public roads. Traffic delay has been a traditional measure of project traffic impacts under CEQA for several decades, but recent changes to CEQA direct public agencies to no longer consider traffic delay as a CEQA impact. Traffic delay-based metrics such as roadway capacity and level of service performance measures that have traditionally been used to assess transportation impacts of projects under CEQA must be replaced by new performance measures, such as vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The TIS is included as an attachment to this EIR and provides information pertaining to anticipated changes to levels of service that could occur as a result of the Project. That analysis is provided for informational purposes only and the changes in levels of service are not considered an impact under CEQA.

The Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020) adopted in September 2020, incorporated policies and implementation programs pertaining to VMT. This EIR discusses anticipated VMT associated with the Project and provides a context for consideration of regional VMT associated with the transport of aggregates.

3.9.1 Setting

3.9.1.1 Site Access and Local Road Network

The Project site is located in unincorporated Ventura County approximately two miles south of U.S. Highway 101 (US 101) and south of the City of Camarillo, as shown on Figure 2-2. Access to the Project site is provided by a gated private access road from Howard Road. Under existing operations, trucks leaving the site travel down Howard Road to Pancho Road then to Pleasant Valley Road from where they either turn left (west) toward Lewis Road or turn right (north) toward State Highway 101 for delivery of aggregate materials to various destinations. Haul trucks traveling to the site use these same roads. According to the application, the market area is primarily within Ventura, Los Angeles, and Santa Barbara counties.

3.9.1.2 Baseline Vehicle Trips with Existing Operations

The existing operation is permitted to generate up to 60 truckloads of offsite material transport per day, Monday through Saturday, resulting in up to 120 one-way truck trips per day (one load results in two haul truck trips consisting of one inbound trip of an unloaded truck and one outbound trip of a loaded truck). Information regarding existing operations is not available to provide a detailed accounting of baseline daily trips and the distance traveled by those trips for the existing operation. Estimates of daily and annual trips under baseline conditions have been made for the purposes of evaluations in this EIR using information from operational records available to the County.

Daily Haul Truck Trips

According to operator reporting submitted to the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (VCAPCD), "VCAPCD Data for Pacific Rock Quarry, EXTEC Usage 2015 – 2016," (VCAPCD, 2019) included with this EIR as Appendix F-2, total annual production during the period August 1, 2015 through

July 31, 2016 was 37,345 tons. The records indicate that the aggregate was produced over a total of 90 days during this period. Although onsite production does not necessarily directly equate to offsite transport, an assumed correlation between onsite production and offsite transport is considered sufficient for the purposes of this analysis. Based on a typical haul truck load capacity of 25 tons, the transport of 37,345 tons of aggregate requires 1,494 haul truck loads, resulting in an average of 16.6 haul truck loads and an average of 33.2 one-way haul truck trips per operational day under baseline conditions.

Annual Haul Truck Trips

The operator submits "Mining Operation Annual Reports" to the County and the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mine Reclamation (DMR). Based on these records, annual average production for the 10-year period between 2008 and 2017 is approximately 20,900 tons (as shown in Table 3.1-1, "2008 – 2017 Reported Annual Production," in Section 3.1.3). The County has directed that the 10-year average of 20,900 tons be used as the annual production baseline for the purposes of environmental review. Applying the 25-ton haul load capacity factor, the 20,900 tons of material requires 836 haul truck loads or 1,672 haul truck trips per year under baseline conditions.

Daily and Annual Worker Trips

The number of workers at the site under existing operations varies depending on activities occurring on any given day. The operator advised the County that on November 27, 2018 (the day traffic counts were taken associated with the TIS discussed previously) there were three worker trips to the site and three worker trips from the site, for a total of six worker trips on that day (the same day involved nine aggregate truck loads from the site, indicating that site operations and shipments were occurring on that day). Based on this data, three workers resulting in six worker trips per day is considered a reasonable estimate of worker trips on a typical day of operations under baseline conditions. Assuming, as discussed above, 90 days of operations under baseline conditions, 540 worker trips per year is considered a reasonable estimate for baseline conditions.

3.9.1.3 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The City of Camarillo Bikeway Master Plan identifies existing Class II bike lanes along the study segments of Pleasant Valley Road and Santa Rosa Road and a planned Class II bike lane along Pancho Road. Sidewalks are located the north/west side of the Pleasant Valley Road study segment, both sides of the Santa Rosa Road study segment, and along the east side of Pancho Road. The existing Class II bike lanes and pedestrian facilities cross Lewis Road, Pancho Road, and US 101 NB and SB ramps at traffic-controlled intersections.

3.9.1.4 Transit Services

Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) operates VCTC Intercity, an inter-city bus network that operates primarily within Ventura County, with service also extending into Santa Barbara and Los Angeles Counties. VCTC Intercity operates eight fixed routes that provide inter-city service between Los Angeles, Thousand Oaks, Simi Valley, Moorpark, Camarillo, Oxnard, California State University Channel Islands (CSUCI), Piru, Fillmore, Santa Paula, Ventura, Carpinteria, Santa Barbara, and Goleta. Camarillo Area Transit (CAT) operates one fixed route and one trolley within the City of Camarillo. Camarillo Area Transit (CAT) operates one fixed route and one trolley within the City of Camarillo. The Project site is not located along or served by a fix transit route.

3.9.1.5 Regulatory Framework

Ventura County General Plan

Goal CTM-1 of the Circulation, Transportation, and Mobility Element of the "Ventura County 2040 General Plan" (Ventura County, 2020) is, "To ensure the design, construction, and maintenance of a safe and efficient roadway system for the movement of persons and goods." General Plan policies associated with transportation and circulation potentially applicable to the Project are identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR.

3.9.2 Impact Analysis

3.9.2.1 Significance Thresholds

This section provides an overview of the impact criteria and significance thresholds used to evaluate Project impacts associated with transportation and circulation based on the Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) and Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

Ventura County ISAG

The Ventura County ISAG identifies the following items as categories of potential impacts related to transportation and circulation. A discussion of the relevance and analysis methods used in this EIR for each item is also provided.

27a(1). Transportation & Circulation - Roads and Highways - Level of Service (LOS)

ISAG item 27a(1) addresses the potential for a project to cause or contribute to congestion and identifies specific traffic operation levels of service that are considered acceptable, below which a project's impacts would be considered significant. As discussed in the introduction to this Section 3.9, recent changes to CEQA as a result of SB 743 require that congestion no longer be considered an impact under CEQA. Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020) Policy CTM-1.1 directs that, "the County shall require evaluation of County General Plan land use designation changes, zone changes, and discretionary development for their individual (i.e., project-specific) and cumulative transportation impacts based on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the methodology and thresholds of significance criteria set forth in the County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines."

General Plan Implementation Program CTM-B directs that the ISAG be updated no later than 2025 to address VMT and safety metrics pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3. General Plan Implementation Program CTM-P directs that, "Following June 30, 2020 and prior to completion of Implementation Program CTM-B, all projects (not otherwise exempt from CEQA analysis) shall be evaluated for potential environmental impacts relative to VMT using the State's minimum reduction standards," and lists several land use categories with baseline VMT and threshold VMT. Mining and aggregate production facilities are not included in the land use categories defined by CTM-P. Given the unique character of mining operations and the need for such operations to be located where mineral resources are present, the thresholds and reduction targets of CTM-P are not considered relevant to evaluation of VMT for the proposed Project. Nevertheless, Impact TC-1 of this EIR provides a comprehensive discussion of VMT associated with the existing operation baseline conditions, conditions under the proposed Project, and regional aggregate transportation factors to assess whether the Project would have a significant VMT impact. Further discussion of the methodology and rationale for the VMT impact analysis is provided at Impact TC-1.

Although the 2011 ISAG CEQA impact criteria pertaining to congestion and levels of service are no longer applicable to transportation impact analyses under CEQA, the Ventura County 2040 General Plan retains policies that require evaluation of congestion and levels of service for non-CEQA purposes. For informational and disclosure purposes the County commissioned an evaluation of predicted changes in levels of service resulting from Project-related vehicle trips on public roads in the Project vicinity. That analysis is presented in the Transportation Impact Study (TIS) (VRPA, 2020) included as Appendix F-1 of this EIR.

The TIS evaluates the Project assuming that the Project would generate 30 truckloads (resulting in 60 one-way trips) per hour during AM peak hours and up to 15 truckloads per hour (resulting 30 one-way trips) during PM peak hours. Although the existing operation generates haul truck and worker trips, the TIS evaluates the Project as if all trips associated with haul trucks during the AM and PM peak-hour periods are new trips that do not currently occur under baseline conditions. A "Passenger Car Equivalent" (PCE) factor of 2.5 was applied to Project truck trips for the TIS evaluation. This TIS evaluates traffic operations within a study area that includes four signalized intersections along Pleasant Valley Road (Lewis Road, Pancho Road, US 101 southbound ramps, and US 101 northbound ramps) and five road segments including two segments on Pancho Road, two segments on Pleasant Valley Road, and one segment of Santa Rosa Road. In consideration of level of service (LOS) standards of jurisdiction agencies (including Ventura County, the City of Camarillo, and California Department of Transportation [Caltrans]), LOS C is used as the lowest acceptable level of service. The TIS considers the following three scenarios, each for conditions without and with the Project:

- Existing Conditions
- Existing Plus Approved/Pending Projects
- Year 2030 / Cumulative

The analysis in the TIS indicates that the addition of Project-related trips to Existing Conditions would not cause or contribute to LOS D or worse conditions at study area intersections; however, the addition of Project-related trips to Existing Plus Approved/Pending Projects and Cumulative Year 2030 Without Project conditions would contribute to LOS D or worse at certain intersections. The analysis also indicates that the Project would cause or contribute to existing and predicted future LOS D or worse conditions on four of the five study road segments.

Additional detail regarding methods, assumptions, and analysis results are provided in the TIS. As discussed, the analysis and conclusions are provided for information purposes and the Project effect on congestion/levels of service is not, and cannot be, considered to represent a CEQA impact. For the purposes of the Transportation and Circulation analysis in this EIR, this issue is eliminated from further consideration.

27a(2). Transportation & Circulation - Roads and Highways - Safety and Design of Public Roads

As identified in the ISAG, project-specific and cumulative impacts associated with safety and design of public roads pertain to a project's consistency in design of proposed public roads and intersections. The Project does not involve construction or modification of public roads. See Impact TC-2 for discussion of potential impacts associated with road hazards.

27a(3). Transportation & Circulation - Roads & Highways – Safety & Design of Private Access

As identified in the ISAG, design of a private road is reviewed by the County on a case-by-case basis and is governed by County design criteria. Operations under the Project would continue to utilize the existing private access driveway as under baseline conditions and does not propose any changes to the provide access driveway. The County's plan review process will consider site design configuration separate from the environmental impact analysis, and no potential for an environmental impact associated with safety and design of the site's access road has been identified. Therefore, this issue is eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

27a(4). Transportation & Circulation - Roads & Highways - Tactical Access

The ISAG identifies that if a road or access route is proposed for a project, there is a potential for a significant impact if there is a single access and the access road exceeds 800 feet in length. Operations under the proposed Project would continue to utilize existing public and private roads and does not propose any changes to the existing site access driveway. Because no new public or private roads are proposed or required for the project, this issue is eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

27b. Transportation & Circulation - Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities

The ISAG identifies that a project that will cause actual or potential barriers to existing or planned pedestrian/bicycle facilities may have a significant impact. Additionally, the ISAG identifies that projects that generate or attract pedestrian/bicycle traffic volumes meeting requirements for protected highway crossings or pedestrian and bicycle facilities may have a significant impact. Determinations of impact significance, both project and cumulative, are to be made on a case-by-case basis. Potential impacts associated with pedestrian and bicycle facilities are address at Impact TC-4, below.

27c. Transportation & Circulation - Bus Transit

The ISAG identifies that a project will normally have a significant impact on bus transit if it would substantially interfere with existing bus transit facilities or routes, or if it would create a substantial increased demand for additional or new bus transit facilities/services. Potential impacts associated with bus transit are addressed at Impact TC-5, below.

27d. Transportation & Circulation - Railroads

The ISAG identifies that a project will normally have a significant impact on a railroad if it would individually or cumulatively substantially interfere with an existing railroad's facilities or operations. No existing or planned railroad facilities or operations have been identified in the vicinity of the Project site or that otherwise could be interfered with as a result of Project operations. Therefore, this issue is eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

27e. Transportation & Circulation – Airports

The ISAG identifies that projects located outside the sphere of influence of any airport are considered to have a less-than-significant impact. The two airports nearest the Project site are the Camarillo Airport general aviation airport and Point Magu Naval Air Station. The Camarillo Airport is located approximately 4.5 miles northwest of the Project site and the Point Magu Naval Air Station is located approximately 7 miles southwest of the Project site. Review of the *Airport Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update for Ventura County* (Coffman Associates, Inc.; Adopted July 7, 2000) and the *Airport Master Plan for Camarillo Airport* (Coffman Associates, Inc.; 2011) concludes that the Project site is not located within the protected air space of either of these airports. No aspects of the Project have been identified that

would have the potential to conflict with operations of these airports. Therefore, this issue is eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

27f. Transportation & Circulation - Harbor Facilities

The ISAG identifies that a project will have an impact on a harbor if the construction or operation of the project will increase the demand for commercial boat traffic and/or adjacent commercial boat facilities. The Project will not increase demand for commercial boat traffic or facilities. Therefore, this issue is eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

27g. Transportation & Circulation - Pipelines

The ISAG identifies that a project would have a significant impact if it would substantially interfere with, or compromise the integrity or affect the operation of, an existing pipeline. No existing pipelines have been identified within the Project area with which the Project could interfere or otherwise effect. Therefore, this issue is eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

CEQA

In addition to the ISAG items listed above, this impact assessment considers criteria identified in the "Transportation" checklist in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, which includes assessing if the Project would:

a) conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities;
b) conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b);
c) substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment); or
d) result in inadequate emergency access.

3.9.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact TC-1: Potential for the Project to contribute to regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT) associated with haul trucks and worker trips. (CEQA b) (Less than Significant)

Impact Analysis Overview

As discussed previously in this EIR, the CEQA Guidelines were amended in December 2018 as a result of amendments to the CEQA statute pursuant to SB 743 of 2013. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 describes specific considerations for evaluating a project's transportation impacts and advises that vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is generally the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts. As discussed in Section 3.9.2.1, above, the Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020) incorporates the requirement to consider VMT in project CEQA analyses and directs that the ISAG be updated by 2025 to incorporate guidance and thresholds for evaluating VMT impacts under CEQA. Interim VMT analysis guidance and thresholds in General Plan Implementation Program CTP-P do not define applicable thresholds for aggregate mining operations such as the proposed Project. However, this impact discussion provides estimates of VMT associated with the Project and provides other relevant information pertaining to the trip generation characteristics of aggregate surface mining operations relevant for consideration in the context of assessing Project implications associated with regional VMT.

In the absence of County-adopted analysis methodologies or thresholds applicable to VMT impacts associated with aggregate production facilities , and in consideration of other factors discussed here regarding regional VMT associated with regional aggregate transport, the Project's impact related to VMT is considered less than significant. Section 3.4 of this EIR provides an assessment of impacts associated with air pollutant and GHG emissions associated with the Project, and considers emissions associated with on-site as well as off-site emissions from Project-related vehicle trips. Since a key element of SB 743's amendments to CEQA is to emphasize consideration of land use planning and climate change issues, the GHG analysis in this EIR contributes to the County's comprehensive effort at evaluating and disclosing the potential environmental impacts of the Project, including impacts associated with Project-related VMT and emissions.

The assessment presented here and the air pollutant/GHG emissions assessment in Section 3.4 conservatively assume that VMT associated with baseline conditions for the existing operation is lower than the levels allowed under the existing CUP and lower than the levels that the Applicant advises have periodically occurred under the existing operation. Conversely, this EIR evaluates VMT and emissions associated with the Project assuming operation at the maximum daily and annual production that would be permitted under the requested CUP amendment.

Project Trip Generation

The Project would produce aggregate for the regional market, supplying areas in Los Angeles, Ventura, and Santa Barbara counties, as under the existing operation. The Project would also import concrete and asphalt for recycling, export processed recycled concrete and asphalt, and import fill material for reclamation purposes. These materials are not imported to the site under baseline conditions. Total daily haul truck trips associated with the Project would be 60 loads (120 one-way trips) per day, consistent with the existing CUP haul truck trip limit. With the Project, the daily limit would apply to all haul truck loads associated with the operation, such that the combined number of outbound loads of aggregate and processes recycled concrete and asphalt, inbound loads of concrete and asphalt for recycle process, and inbound loads of fill material would be limited to a total of 60 loads, each with an assumed corresponding inbound or outbound empty truck trip. The Project would allow for hauling to and from the site seven days a week and this analysis conservatively assumes that hauling could occur at the maximum daily rate 365 days per year, resulting in a maximum potential of 21,900 haul truck loads (43,800 one-way trips) per year. The Applicant advises that the Project would require up to 12 workers per day, each resulting in an assumed two one-way trips, resulting in a total of 24 one-way worker trips per day and 8,760 one-way worker trips per year. (Other vehicle trips would periodically be needed for equipment, fuel, and other supply deliveries, and maintenance. These trips would represent a minimal portion of the total Project-related trips and are sufficiently accounted for in the estimates of haul truck and worker trips.)

Average Trip Distance

Specific origins and destination of trips to and from the site would vary based on market demands and individual construction project locations which are currently unknown. Therefore, actual travel distances between the site and destination/source locations cannot be determined. The Applicant estimated an average off-site haul truck trip distance of 10 miles. However, in preparing the analysis for this EIR and considering the three-county market area of the Project, the County determined that a 20-mile average trip distance was appropriate as a more conservative assumption of average haul trip distance. The 20-mile average trip distance assumption is considered appropriate for trips under the

existing operation baseline conditions and for future Project operations and, as an assumption for the purposes of this evaluation, is considered applicable to both haul trucks and worker trips.

Estimated Project-Related VMT

Tables 3.9-1 and 3.9-2 below provide estimated daily and annual VMT associated with the existing operation baseline conditions and with the Project operating at maximum permitted levels. Baseline trip generation estimates are derived as discussed above in Section 3.9.1.2 and Project trip generation estimates are derived as discussed in the preceding sections. The assumed average trip distance of 20 miles is used for all scenarios. As shown in Table 3.9-1, the Project operating at maximum daily permitted levels would result in an estimated increase in VMT over baseline conditions of 2,096 miles per day. As shown in Table 3.9-2, the Project operating at daily permitted levels every day of a calendar year would result in an estimated increase in annual VMT over baseline conditions of 1,006,960 miles per year. It is important to note that these estimates do not account for factors that are important for consideration of regional VMT, as discussed in the following section.

Table 3.9-1. Daily Project-Related VMT

Trip Component	Average Trip Distance (miles)	Daily One-Way Trips	Daily VMT (miles)
BASELINE			
Haul Truck (aggregate export)	20	33.2	664
Worker Trips	20	6	120
		Total Baseline	***784***
PROJECT			
Haul Trucks (aggregate export and recycle/fill material import)	20	120	2,400
Worker Trips	20	24	480
		Total Project	***2,880***
		Project Daily VMT Increase from Baseline	**2,096**

Table 3.9-2. Annual Project-Related VMT

Trip Component	Average Trip Distance (miles)	Annual One-Way Trips	Annual VMT (miles)
BASELINE[1]			
Haul Truck (aggregate export)	20	1,672	33,440
Worker Trips	20	540	10,800
		Total Baseline	***44,240***
PROJECT[2]			
Haul Trucks (aggregate export and recycle/fill material import)	20	43,800	876,000
Worker Trips	20	8,760	175,200
		Total Project	***1,051,200***
		Project Annual VMT Increase from Baseline	**1,006,960**

Notes:

1. Annual baseline VMT assumes 90 days of operations during a baseline year.
2. Annual Project VMT assumes maximum daily operations for 365 days.

Regional VMT Effects Associated with Project Operations

The demand for aggregate for construction projects within the region will exist with or without the Project. Without the availability of aggregate from the Project, aggregate for regional construction projects would need to be transported from other surface mining and aggregate production operations. Similarly, the Project would not create or increase the demand for processing demolition concrete and asphalt for recycling and the Project would not create a demand or increase the need for disposal/reuse of surplus fill material. These needs will exist with or without the Project. Thus, with or without the Project, construction aggregate, recycle material, and fill material will be hauled throughout the region resulting in regional aggregate haul truck VMT.

"A Note on the Environmental Costs of Aggregates" (Berck, 2005) assessed the influence of a new aggregate quarry on transportation patterns for delivery of aggregate within area served by the quarry. Berck identified the following effects from new quarry project:

a) The project in itself will not significantly increase the demand for construction materials in the region through market forces, which include the downward pressure on pricing.
b) Truck traffic (i.e. vehicle miles traveled) in the region will not increase and may decrease as a result of the project.

(Berck, 2005: pg. 3)

These conclusions are associated with the relatively *inelastic demand* for aggregate (i.e., a change in price has a minimal effect on the quantity of aggregate demanded). Thus, a new quarry that reduces transportation distances and transportation costs would not result in an increased demand for aggregate in a manner that would result in additional aggregate transport and vehicle miles traveled.

While Berck's analysis focuses on the effects of a "new quarry," his findings can also be applied to the extended operational life of an existing quarry. Closure of an existing quarry and elimination of the availability of aggregate from that quarry would result in the need to transport aggregate from other sources which would create the potential to increase the distances of aggregate transported for regional supplies. Thus, the continuation of an existing mining operation supplying construction aggregates can be reasonably anticipated to reduce vehicle miles traveled associated with aggregate transport on a regional basis.

Berck's analysis is also applicable to concrete and asphalt recycling and fill placement opportunities. Neither the recycling or reclamation fill components of the Project would be expected to influence the amount of concrete and asphalt construction debris generated in the region. These materials are generated as a result of road and other construction projects independent of locations where recycle processing of these materials can occur. It can be reasonably anticipated that to minimize costs associated with recycle processing generators of this material will seek to deliver it to the nearest recycle processing facility. Recycle processing at the Project site would provide an opportunity for asphalt and recycle material generated in proximity to site to be processed there instead of being transported to more distant recycle operations. Similarly, fill material that would be used for reclamation at the Project site would be generated from various regional activities (e.g., construction projects, landslide clearing, harbor dredging) that would occur regardless of whether a disposal/reuse opportunity is provided at the Project site. It is reasonably anticipated that to minimize transportation costs associated with disposal or reuse of such materials, generators needing to dispose of the material would seek to deliver it to the nearest available disposal/reuse location.

These factors suggest that the Project would likely result in *reduced* regional VMT associated with the transport of aggregate, demolition concrete and asphalt, and fill material as compared to conditions without the Project. Thus, the Project-related VMT estimates in the preceding section must be viewed as representative only of the VMT directly associated with the Project and not as an indication of increased regional VMT.

Impact Conclusion

As discussed above, the Project would result haul truck and worker trip VMT above the existing operation baseline condition. However, the demand for aggregate, concrete and asphalt recycling, and disposal/reuse of fill material would be generated by construction and debris removal activities regardless of whether the Project is available to provide a source of aggregate or a location for recycling and fill material reuse. Thus, haul truck and worker trip VMT assigned to the Project in the analysis above, would still be expected to occur within the region to meet these demands. The availability of the Project as a source of aggregate and a location for asphalt and concrete recycling and fill material reuse would provide opportunities for decreased haul distances and decreased regional VMT as compared to conditions without the Project in which case the materials could require hauling to and from more distant locations.

This EIR recognizes that VMT associated with the Project would have the potential to increase as compared to the existing operation baseline conditions. However, given that the Project itself would not induce aggregate transport travel and the Project would create the potential for reductions in regional VMT, this analysis concludes that the Project impact related to VMT is less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation for Impact TC-1:

No mitigation required.

Impact TC-2: Potential for the Project to increase transportation-related hazards on public or private roads due to design or incompatible uses. (CEQA c, ISAG 27a[3]) (Less than Significant)

The Project would not create any new public or private road design features. The existing on-site circulation pattern for truck loading and unloading would remain similar to existing conditions. Although the number of vehicles accessing the site during peak-hour periods could increase as compared to baseline conditions and some incoming haul trucks would be loaded for delivery of recycle materials or fill material, the same types of vehicles (heavy-duty haul trucks and worker passenger vehicles) would continue to access the site. The existing site access/egress is located at a sufficient distance from any intersection to allow for safe vehicular access/egress to and from the site. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation for Impact TC-2:

No mitigation required.

Impact TC-3: Potential for the Project to conflict with emergency response or emergency access. (CEQA d, ISAG 27a[4]) (Less than Significant)

The Project site is currently accessed/egressed via an existing entrance road from Howard Road, a private road that provides access to the Project site and to the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery.

Emergency access to the site would be unaffected by the Project. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation for Impact TC-3:

No mitigation required.

Impact TC-4 Potential for the Project to conflict with bicycle and pedestrian circulation. (CEQA a, ISAG 27b) (Less than Significant)

Project vehicle trips would continue to utilize local roads as under the existing operation, including Pancho Road, Pleasant Valley Road, and Santa Rosa Road in the City of Camarillo. As discussed in Section 3.9.1.3, the City of Camarillo Bikeway Master Plan identifies existing Class II bike lanes along the study segments of Pleasant Valley Road and Santa Rosa Road. The plan also identifies a planned Class II bike lane along Pancho Road, which would be designed in accordance with City of Camarillo standards. Sidewalks presently exist along the north/west side of the Pleasant Valley Road study segment, both sides of the Santa Rosa Road study segment, and along the east side of Pancho Road.

The existing Class II bike lanes and pedestrian facilities cross Lewis Road, Pancho Road, and US 101 NB and SB ramps at traffic-controlled intersections. The signals include pedestrian signal phasing which accommodates pedestrians utilizing the crosswalk. (VRPA, 2020) Through-traffic within the study area is expected to increase over time with or without the Project, and the traffic control devices will help maintain pedestrian and bicycle safety within the study area. Class II bike lanes are identified in the City of Camarillo's General Plan Circulation Element on all study roadway segments, and it is anticipated that the City will retain and add Class II bike lanes on these segments sufficient to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian safety and circulation. The Project would not attract bicyclist and pedestrian use requiring additional facilities and the additional Project trips would not adversely affect existing or planned bicycle or pedestrian facilities in the Project study area.

Mitigation for Impact TC-4

No mitigation required.

Impact TC-5 Potential for the Project to conflict with transit operations. (CEQA a, ISAG 27c) (Less than Significant)

Transit services within the City of Camarillo are served by Fixed Route, Dial-A-Ride and Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC) Intercity service. The Fixed Route service, provided by Camarillo Area Transit (CAT), does not include transit routes in the study area. The VCTC Intercity is a Countywide service, which connects Camarillo with Thousand Oaks, Oxnard and Ventura. The Oxnard/Camarillo/CSUCI route traverses Pleasant Valley Road along Lewis Road, with a stop located along Lewis Road just south of US 101. The Project would not create an increased demand for transit and additional Project trips would not interfere with these transit routes or stops. Therefore, the Project would not result in significant adverse effects on transit operations.

Mitigation for Impact TC-5

No mitigation required.

3.9.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

The transportation and circulation impacts discussed above do not create the potential to contribute substantially to transportation and circulation impacts associated with the projects identified in Section 3.1.5. The TIS included as Appendix F-1 of this EIR provides an assessment of potential changes in levels of service associated with additional Project trips and considers approved and pending projects and cumulative (year 2030) conditions as part of the analysis. However, as discussed above, the level of service analysis is provided for informational purposes and traffic congestion under future/cumulative conditions is not a CEQA impact. The Project would not create the potential for substantial cumulative effects associated with transportation and circulation.

3.9.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies, including those associated with transportation and circulation, is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

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SECTION 3.10 – WATER RESOURCES

SECTION 3.10–WATER RESOURCES

This section evaluates potential impacts of the Project related to hydrology and water quality.

3.10.1 Setting

3.10.1.1 Environmental Setting

The environmental setting consists of the existing hydrologic and water quality conditions in the region and at the Project site. Existing conditions are described below for both surface water and groundwater, and for water quality. The existing conditions define the baseline for the evaluation of potential environmental impacts.

Surface Water

This section describes the environmental setting, or existing conditions, related to surface water, including both surface water occurrence and surface water quality.

Regional Conditions

The Project site is located on the southwest side of Conejo Mountain. Elevations at the Project site range from 165 feet above mean sea level (ft msl) to 940 ft msl, while the elevation of the watershed above the site reaches as high as 1,640 ft msl (Holmes Enterprises, Inc., 2010). The average annual rainfall is approximately 15.5 inches per year (Western Regional Climate Center, 2019). The estimated total rainfall from a 100-year, 24-hour storm event is 6.5 inches (vcwatershed.net/publicMaps/data/, accessed August 12, 2019). The pan evaporation rate[1] is reported to range from 57 inches per year to 68 inches per year (DWR, 1979).

The nearest major surface drainage to the Project site is Conejo Creek, located approximately 2,250 feet to the northwest of the western Project boundary. Conejo Creek is a tributary of Calleguas Creek. The Calleguas Creek Watershed is approximately 30 miles long and 14 miles wide, with a surface area of about 343 square miles. The northern boundary of the watershed is formed by the Santa Susana Mountains, South Mountain and Oak Ridge, the southern boundary is formed by the Simi Hills and Santa Monica Mountains. Primary surface water features of the watershed include Calleguas Creek, Arroyo Las Posas, Arroyo Simi, Conejo Creek, Arroyo Conejo, Arroyo Santa Rosa, Revolon Slough and Mugu Lagoon.

Project Site Conditions

Most of the drainages around the Project site are ephemeral drainages within the mountains that only flow as a result of storm events. Other drainages to the west of the Project site are primarily agricultural drains.

The Project site is underlain by the Conejo Volcanic bedrock geologic unit. There is little or no soil development on the bedrock. Therefore, runoff during major storm events is expected to be

[1] The pan evaporation rate is the rate at which water will evaporate from a standard (Class A) pan used for making such a measurement. The measured pan evaporation rate is used to approximate other water-loss parameters such as the lake evaporation rate and the evapotranspiration rate.

relatively rapid. Surface runoff within the existing disturbed area generally flows toward the northwest toward a man-made retention basin in the northwest corner of the Project site.

Multiple ephemeral drainages exist within Project site that flow into onsite detention basins or to an approximately 3.75-acre offsite pond located immediately west the site. A total of 24 water features (described in more detail in Section 3.5.1.7) were identified within the Project site and survey area in 2016 (BRC, 2017) as shown on Figure 3.5-4, "Waters and Wetlands." Eight natural ephemeral drainages (identified as W1-W8 on Figure 3.5-4) exist in the northwestern and north-central portions of the study area, W1 through W7 are tributaries to W8. The existing mining operation has disconnected W8 as a result of installation of a culvert (identified as C3 on Figure 3.5-4) that conveys flows to the offsite pond west of the site (W24) (BRC, 2017). Additionally, seven natural ephemeral drainages (W9 through W15) exist in the east-central portion of the study area but have also been disconnected by the existing mining operation. The accumulation of sheet flow in these drainages is collected at the lowest point of the quarry and conveyed by culvert (identified as C2 on Figure 3.5-4) that also feeds into the pond (W24). (BRC, 2017) The drainages within the Project site convey ephemeral or intermittent surface flows (some also flow through man-made culverts, as discussed above) and generally flow in a westerly direction until they are ultimately impounded in the detention pond west of the site (W24). (BRC, 2017)

The offsite pond is located outside of and adjacent to the western boundary of the Project site and is hydrologically located between the existing mining operation and Conejo Creek. The pond is used by the existing mining operation and others as a water source for commercial operations (BRC, 2017). Ephemeral and intermittent flows in the onsite drainages can serve as an indirect tributary to Conejo Creek. Surface water flows from the Project site are reported to converge with Conejo Creek via a swale only during high flow events when runoff into the offsite pond overtop the pond's outflow elevation. (BRC, 2017) According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Panel Number 06111C0942E (FEMA, 2019), a small area within the western edge of the Project site and the entirety of the offsite pond (W24) to the west of the site are located within a flood hazard zone (i.e., 100-year floodplain), as shown on Figure 3-4 in Chapter 3. Thus, during flood conditions, the potential exists for the pond to become inundated resulting in discharge to the Conejo Creek drainage.

Stormwater from the existing mining area and the watershed area above the site flows through a series of onsite stormwater retention basins. Stormwater collected in retention basins evaporates or infiltrates, or when in excess of the basins' capacity, flows to the offsite pond west of the Project site. Onsite stormwater retention basin capacities and the frequency, volumes, and flow rates of stormwater that periodically discharges to the offsite pond under existing conditions are unconfirmed. (Although several hydrology studies have been submitted by the Applicant between 2010 and 2019 [Holmes Enterprises, Inc. 2010, 2016, and 2019; Sespe Consulting, 2011], these studies vary in their areas of evaluation, calculation methods and assumptions, and conclusions regarding stormwater runoff rates and volumes. Thus, existing stormwater runoff rates and the volumes of stormwater retained onsite or discharged offsite during various storm event intensities under existing conditions are unconfirmed.)

Water Use under Existing Operations

Water use associated with the existing operation is primarily for dust control on roadways and the active mining area, and for spray bars at the crushing and sorting plant. Current water use is

estimated by the Applicant at 30,000 gallons per day and a total of 27.9 acre-feet per year (Sespe Consulting, Inc., April 1, 2019 – Project Description). The water supply for existing operations consists of recycled wastewater provided to the Applicant under an agreement with the Camarillo Sanitary District (CSD). The CSD wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) is located approximately 0.5 mile north of the Project site. Water is piped from the WWTP to the offsite pond just west of the site boundary. The Applicant has a grant deed with the CSD providing an access easement to the pond for physical access to the pond. Recycled non-potable water is drawn from the pond and held in an onsite 12,000-gallon water tank. Water trucks used for dust suppression are filled continually throughout the day when operations are occurring and dust suppression is required. A 5,000-gallon water tank used to supply water to spray bars used for dust control at the crushing and sorting plant located near the aggregate processing plant is filled daily. There are five additional 3,000-gallon tanks located on the western portion of the site that are used to provide water to existing agricultural operations on the site.

Existing Surface Water Quality

The facility previously operated under a No Exposure Certification (NEC ID: 4 56NEC000433) under the General Permit for stormwater discharges associated with industrial activity. The NEC expired October 5, 2018, and has not been recertified. Prior monitoring reports submitted as part of the NEC do not appear to include monitoring data.

The Applicant submitted a Notice of Intent (NOI) for coverage under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Industrial General Permit for stormwater discharges on March 6, 2019 and was issued Waste Discharge Identification Number (WDID) 4 56NNA000348. Stormwater runoff from existing operations is reported to currently be retained onsite or within the offsite pond west of the Project site. Water quality monitoring data for surface/stormwater runoff under existing site conditions was not provided with the application.

As discussed in Chapter 3, the primary method of mine excavation under existing operations is blasting. The primary blasting agent used at the site is ammonium nitrate fuel oil (ANFO) and other ancillary materials used at the quarry include detonator sensitive emulsion and nitroglycerine-based explosives, detonating cord, DC cast boosters (primers), detonators, delays, relays, starters, lead-in-lines, shock tubes. (Sespe Consulting, March 8, 2019, memorandum, "Water Quality Impact Assessment, Storage and Use of Blasting Agents, Pacific Rock Quarry" [Sespe, 2019c], included as Appendix G of this EIR). Use of ANFO creates the potential for water quality degradation, but with proper use and implementation of best management practices, this potential can be minimized. Data regarding the presence or absence of ANFO components in stormwater runoff, the onsite detention ponds, or the offsite water supply pond under existing conditions was not provided with the application. Although the "Water Quality Impact Assessment, Storage and Use of Blasting Agents, Pacific Rock Quarry" (Sespe, 2019c) identifies recommended mitigation measures for use of ANFO (as discussed further at Impact WR-2, below), it is unclear whether these or other practices are used at the site under existing operations.

Groundwater

This section describes the environmental setting, or existing conditions, related to groundwater, including both groundwater occurrence and groundwater quality.

Regional Conditions

The area to the north, east, and south of the Pacific Rock Quarry is composed of the Conejo Volcanics bedrock unit. This area is not identified as being part of a groundwater basin, however, the valley area to the west and including a portion of the Project site is part of the Pleasant Valley Groundwater Basin (Basin Number 4-006), as defined by the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) (2016). The Pleasant Valley Basin is an alluvial groundwater basin approximately 77 square miles in area, with surface elevations ranging from approximately 30 to 680 feet above mean sea level. Land use overlying the basin is divided between agricultural (approximately 40 percent of the area), residential and urban uses (approximately 50 percent of the area), and open space (approximately 10 percent of the area). (FCGMA, 2019) The volume of groundwater estimated to be in storage in the basin in 1999 (DWR, 2003) was 1,130,000 acre-feet. For the period 1985 through 2015, average annual recharge to the Pleasant Valley Basin was 6,564 acre-feet per year and average annual groundwater extraction from the basin was 15,671 acre-feet per year (FCGMA, 2019; Tables 2-9, 2-10).

The Pleasant Valley Groundwater Basin is classified as a high priority basin that exhibits critical conditions of overdraft, according to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Basin Prioritization Dashboard (https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/bp-dashboard/p2/, accessed August 12, 2019). As such, the requirements of SGMA apply to the basin. (See Section 3.10.1.2, below, for additional discussion of SGMA.) In accordance with SGMA, the Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency (FCGMA) prepared and adopted the "Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Pleasant Valley Basin" (GSP) in December 2019. The purpose of the GSP is to define the conditions under which the groundwater resources of the entire Pleasant Valley Basin will be managed sustainably in the future. As described in the GSP, the Pleasant Valley Basin shares a boundary and is in hydraulic communication with Oxnard Subbasin (DWR Basin 4-004.02) to the west. The boundary between the Pleasant Valley Basin and the Oxnard Subbasin is associated with a change in character of recent and older alluvial deposits. In the Pleasant Valley Basin, these deposits are finer grained and are, in general, less suitable for groundwater production than the coarser-grained sediments of the same age in the Oxnard Subbasin. Groundwater production from wells on either side of the boundary between the Pleasant Valley Basin and the Oxnard Subbasin influences groundwater elevations and the direction of groundwater flow between the two basins. Historical groundwater production from the Pleasant Valley Basin and Oxnard Subbasin combined has resulted in seawater intrusion in the aquifers of the Oxnard Subbasin. In the Pleasant Valley Basin, the average rate of groundwater production between 2015 and 2017 was approximately 13,200 acre-feet per year. Numerical groundwater simulations indicate that if these production rates were carried into the future, groundwater elevations in the Pleasant Valley Basin would not recover during multi-year cycles of drought and recovery, and seawater intrusion would continue in the Oxnard Subbasin. With the currently available projects and management actions, the sustainable yield of the Pleasant Valley Basin is estimated to be approximately 11,600 acre-feet per year (with an uncertainty of ± 1,200 acre-feet per year). At the upper bound of the uncertainty estimate (12,600 acre-feet per year), the estimated sustainable yield of the Pleasant Valley Basin is 600 acre-feet per year lower than the 2015–2017 average production rate. (FCGMA, 2019; pp. ES-1,2)

Under SGMA, undesirable results occur when the effects caused by groundwater conditions occurring throughout the Pleasant Valley Basin cause significant and unreasonable impacts to any of the six sustainability indicators:

- Chronic lowering of groundwater levels

- Reduction of groundwater storage
- Seawater intrusion
- Degraded water quality
- Land subsidence
- Depletions of interconnected surface water

Of the six sustainability indicators, chronic lowering of groundwater levels, reduction of groundwater storage, degraded water quality, and land subsidence are applicable to the Pleasant Valley Basin. The Pleasant Valley Basin does not experience direct seawater intrusion, but groundwater elevations in the Pleasant Valley Basin affect seawater intrusion in the Oxnard Subbasin. Depletion of interconnected surface water is also not occurring within the Pleasant Valley Basin, where surface water bodies are ephemeral, losing streams, with groundwater elevations below the bottom of the stream channels. (FCGMA, 2019)

Site Conditions

The Project site is located at the southwest base of Conejo Mountain, which is comprised primarily of an intrusive dacitic dome. The intrusive dactic bedrock is assigned to the middle Miocene age Conejo Volcanics geologic formation which includes extrusive and intrusive, submarine and subaerial volcanic material. (JCR, 2016) The Conejo Volcanics unit is not considered to yield appreciable groundwater (Hanson et al., 2003). Moreover, recharge into the Conejo Volcanics is expected to be nominal due to the relatively low annual average rainfall, as above under Surface Water – Regional Conditions.

In 2004, a boring was drilled to a total depth of 278 feet below ground surface (ft bgs) at the western edge of the Project site (Hopkins Groundwater Consultants, April 2004). After initial testing, a six-inch diameter well was completed to a total depth of 200 ft bgs. The depth to groundwater at the time the well was drilled was at 84.4 ft bgs. Well testing indicated that the well may be capable of a long-term pumping rate of 10 gallons per minute (gpm). While this well is present on the Project site, County records indicate that it is located outside of the Pleasant Valley Groundwater Basin and that the well is classified as "abandoned" status. No other wells are identified within the Project site or parcel boundaries. As such, it is assumed that under existing conditions, no groundwater is pumped from within the site.

Existing Groundwater Quality

There currently are no water quality data available for groundwater at the Project site. Thus, the existing levels of naturally occurring minerals, salts, and metals are unknown. In addition, any potential influence from current operations is uncertain.

As discussed above under "Existing Surface Water Quality," blasting agents are currently used as part of the existing mining operations, and can pose a significant risk to groundwater, resulting in groundwater contamination by nitrate or other nitrogen-containing compounds. These risks are dependent on the geology, depth to groundwater compared to the depth of mining and/or blasting, the nature and occurrence of surface water, and the rate of percolation of local rainfall. As discussed above, if not managed in accordance with best practices, ANFO can cause both surface water and groundwater quality degradation. Specific handling practices under existing operations have not been determined for this analysis.

3.10.1.2 Regulatory Framework

This section provides a discussion of federal, state, and local regulations pertaining to hydrology and water quality.

Federal

Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.)

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act, commonly known as the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA), established the basic structure for regulating discharges of pollutants into the waters of the United States. This gave U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the authority to implement pollution control programs such as setting water quality standards and criteria for contaminants in surface waters. The CWA does not deal directly with groundwater or with water quantity issues. Section 208 requires the use of best management practices (BMPs) to control releases of pollutants in stormwater at construction sites.

CWA Section 303(d) requires States, territories, and tribes to develop lists of impaired waters within their jurisdictions every two years. Impaired waters are those that do not meet water quality standards. States, territories, and tribes are also required to establish priority rankings for waters on their respective lists. Water bodies in a given State or territory are prioritized by comparing their existing degrees of pollution, and the sensitivity and importance of beneficial uses that are being threatened. The water bodies that are deemed most important are designated as "high priority." Section 303(d) also requires States, territories, and tribes to develop Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for all water bodies on their respective lists of impaired waters. In essence, TMDLs are plans by which impaired water bodies would be restored such that they consistently meet the established water quality standard(s) that are currently being violated. TMDLs specify the maximum amount of pollutants that a water body can receive and still meet water quality standards, and allocates pollutant loads among point and non-point sources in the subject watershed. The intent of CWA is for the TMDL program to work hand in hand with the impaired waters lists; impaired waters are identified, and then restored to meet water quality standards.

The Project is located within the Calleguas Creek watershed and each of the major waterbodies of the Calleguas Creek watershed have been listed under Section 303(d) as impaired. Table 3.10-1 lists these waterbodies in the Project area, and the pollutants contributing to impairment.

Table 3.10- 1. Impaired Waters of the Calleguas Creek Watershed

Water Body	Pollutant
Oxnard Drain 2	ChemA, chlordane, DDT, nitrogen, PCBs, sediment toxicity, toxaphene, toxicity
Oxnard Drain 3	ChemA, chlordane, DDT, nitrogen, PCBs, sediment toxicity, toxaphene,
Mugu Lagoon (Calleguas Creek, Reach 1)	Chlordane, copper, DDT, dieldrin, endosulfan, mercury, nickel, nitrogen, PCBs, sediment toxicity, siltation, toxaphene, zinc
Calleguas Creek, Revolon Slough, Arroyo Simi, Arroyo Las Posas (Calleguas Creek Reaches 2-8)	Ammonia, ChemA, chlordane, copper, DDT, dieldrin, endosulfan, fecal coliform, nitrogen, PCBs, sediment toxicity, siltation, toxaphene, trash, chloride, nitrate and nitrite, total dissolved solids, chlorpyrifos, diazinon, selenium, toxicity, sulfates, boron, indicator bacteria, organophosphorus pesticides

Water Body	Pollutant
Conejo Creek (Calleguas Creek Reach 9)	ChemA, chlordane, chlorpyrifos, DDT, diazinon, dieldrin, endosulfan, fecal coliform, lindane, nitrate, nitrogen, PCBs, sulfates, total dissolved solids, chloride, toxaphene, toxicity, trash, ammonia, indicator bacteria
Arroyo Conejo (Calleguas Creek Reaches 10-13)	Ammonia, chlordane, chloride, chlorpyrifos, DDT, diazinon, dieldrin, endosulfan, fecal coliform, nitrate, PCBs, sulfates, chloride, total dissolved solids, toxaphene, trash, siltation, ChemA, toxicity

CWA Section 401 requires the federal government to obtain certification from the state that a project is consistent with state water quality standards. CWA Section 402(p)(3)(B)(iii) authorizes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit program to control water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. Point sources are discrete conveyances such as pipes or man-made ditches. CWA Section 404 authorizes the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to regulate projects that will discharge dredge or fill materials into waters of the U.S.

Construction projects and many industrial facilities must obtain NPDES permits to control the release of industrial chemicals in stormwater runoff. Stormwater discharges are generated by runoff from land and impervious areas such as paved streets, parking lots, and building rooftops during rainfall events that often contain pollutants in quantities that could adversely affect water quality. The primary method to control stormwater discharges is through the use of BMPs.

Federal Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974

First enacted in 1974 and substantively amended in 1986 and 1996, the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act authorizes the U.S. EPA to set national health-based standards for drinking water to protect against both naturally occurring and manmade contaminants that may be found in drinking water.

State

Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)

The regulations set by the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) pertain to water quality aspects of discharges of solid waste to land for treatment, storage, or disposal. The provisions of California Code of Regulations, Title 27, Division 2, Article 1, Subchapter 1, Chapter 7, Subdivision 1 (§22470), regulate the discharge of mining waste. The standards set by the RWQCB do not override or relieve an owner of compliance with other orders, laws, regulations, or other requirements of other approval, regulatory, or enforcement agencies, such as the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC), local health entities, water and air quality control boards, local land use authorities, fire authorities, and other agencies.

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act

The Porter-Cologne Act (California Water Code Section 13000) is the principal law governing water quality regulation in California. It establishes a comprehensive program to protect water quality and the beneficial uses of water. The Porter-Cologne Act applies to surface waters, wetlands, and groundwater, and to both point and non-point sources of pollution. Pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Act, it is the policy of the State:

- The quality of all the waters of the State shall be protected.
- All activities and factors affecting the quality of water shall be regulated to attain the highest water quality within reason.
- The State must be prepared to exercise its full power and jurisdiction to protect the quality of water in the State from degradation.
- The State shall undertake all possible steps to encourage development of water recycling facilities to help meet the growing water requirements of the State.

Pursuant to the Porter-Cologne Act, the responsibility for protection of water quality in California rests with the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB). The SWRCB administers Federal and State water quality regulations for California's ocean waters, and also oversees and funds the State's nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs). The RWQCBs prepare water quality control plans, establish water quality objectives, and carry out Federal and State water quality regulations and permitting duties for inland water bodies, enclosed bays, and estuaries within their respective regions. The Porter-Cologne Act gives the SWRCB and RWQCBs broad powers to protect water quality by regulating waste dischargers to water and land, and requiring cleanup of hazardous wastes.

The RWQCBs regulate discharges under the Porter-Cologne Act primarily through issuance of National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and waste discharge report permits. Anyone discharging or proposing to discharge materials that could affect water quality (other than to a community sanitary sewer system regulated by an NPDES permit) must file a report of waste discharge. The Porter-Cologne Act provides RWQCBs with several options for enforcing regulations, including cease and desist orders, cleanup and abatement orders, administrative civil liability orders, civil court actions, and criminal prosecutions.

The Calleguas Creek watershed is within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (LARWQCB), which includes coastal drainages from Rincon Point (western boundary of Ventura County) to the eastern Los Angeles County boundary.

Per the requirements of the CWA and the California Porter-Cologne Act, LARWQCB has prepared a Water Quality Control Plan for the watersheds under its jurisdiction. The Water Quality Control Plans from all nine of the RWQCBs and the California Ocean Plan (prepared and implemented by SWRCB) collectively constitute the State Water Quality Control Plan. Water Quality Control Plan, Los Angeles Region has been designed to support the intentions of the CWA and the Porter-Cologne Act by: (1) characterizing watersheds within the Los Angeles Region; (2) identifying beneficial uses that exist or have the potential to exist in each water body; (3) establishing water quality objectives for each water body to protect beneficial uses or allow their restoration, and; (4) providing an implementation program that achieves water quality objectives. Implementation program measures include monitoring, permitting, and enforcement activities. Per the requirements of CWA Section 303(c), the Water Quality Control Plan is reviewed every three years and revised as necessary to address problems with the plan, and meet new legislative requirements.

Beneficial uses designated by LARWQCB in the Water Quality Control Plan for the Calleguas Creek watershed are listed in Table 3.10-2. Beneficial uses are potential uses of surface waters and groundwater that could be supported, including water supply, recharge of groundwater supplies, recreation and wildlife habitat. Consistent with the requirements of CWA Section 303(d), LARWQCB

identifies impaired waters and prepares TMDLs for impaired waters within its jurisdiction. TMDLs completed to date for the Calleguas Creek Watershed include:

- Nitrogen compounds: in effect July 16, 2003 (waste load allocations updated, effective 2009);
- Toxicity, chlorpyrifos and diazinon: in effect March 24, 2006;
- Organochlorine pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls and siltation: in effect March 24, 2006;
- Metals and selenium: in effect March 26, 2007;
- Boron, chloride, sulfate and total dissolved solids (TDS) (salts): in effect December 2, 2008;
- Trash (Revolon Slough and Beardsley Wash): in effect March 6, 2008.
- Salts: in effect December 2, 2008.
- Pesticides, PCBs and sediment toxicity (Oxnard Drain 3): October 6, 2011.

Each of the above approved TMDLs have compliance deadlines of 15 to 20 years from the date of adoption, along with implementation plans or necessary technical studies needed to bring waterbodies into compliance with TMDL requirements.

Table 3.10- 2. Beneficial Uses of Surface Waters of the Calleguas Creek Watershed

Resource	Beneficial Uses
Mugu Lagoon, including Oxnard Drain 3	Navigation, water-contact recreation (potential), non-water contact recreation, commercial and sport fishing, estuarine habitat, marine habitat, wildlife habitat, preservation of biological habitats, rare, threatened or endangered species habitat, migration of aquatic organisms, spawning habitat, shellfish harvesting, wetland habitat
Calleguas Creek (Arroyo Simi, Arroyo Las Posas)	Municipal water supply (potential), industrial water supply, industrial process supply, agricultural supply, groundwater replenishment, water-contact recreation, non-water contact recreation, warm freshwater habitat, wildlife habitat, wetland habitat
Conejo Creek	Municipal water supply (potential), industrial water supply, industrial process supply, agricultural supply, groundwater replenishment, water-contact recreation, non-water contact recreation, warm freshwater habitat, wildlife habitat
Arroyo Conejo	Municipal water supply (potential), groundwater replenishment (intermittent), freshwater replenishment (intermittent), water-contact recreation (intermittent), non-water contact recreation (intermittent), warm freshwater habitat (intermittent), wildlife habitat

Salts (TDS, chloride, and sulfates) are a critical factor affecting water quality in the watershed. The connection between salts and water supply are inextricably linked in watersheds where imported water supplies are extensively utilized. The evolution of the Salts TMDL reflects a growing understanding of how water supply management, wastewater management, and surface water quality standards are linked.

Even during average to slightly above average rainfall years, more salts enter the watershed on an average daily basis through imported water supplies, than is transported off the watershed in surface

waters. While wet and dry weather patterns follow a generally cyclical pattern, there can be significant variation in the length of dry weather patterns (Hanson et al., 2003). The accumulation of salts during these relatively dry periods and the subsequent release during wet weather cycles complicates the instantaneous management of chlorides and salts on the watershed by stockpiling salts that once in solution would exceed the assimilative capacity of other contributing sources to the surface waters. Unless salts are actively managed, stranded salts will continue to accumulate and periodically impair surface waters. They also have the potential to further degrade groundwater sources.

Senate Bill 610: Water Supply Assessment

Water Code §§10910 through 10915 were amended by Senate Bill 610 (SB 610) in 2002. Under certain circumstances for certain types of projects, SB 610 requires an assessment of available water supplies to determine if they are sufficient to serve the demand generated by a project, as well as the reasonably foreseeable demand in the region over the next 20 years under average normal year, single dry year, and multiple dry year conditions.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014

On September 16, 2014, Governor Brown signed a legislative package known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) aimed at providing a comprehensive statewide regulation of groundwater management in California. SGMA became effective on January 1, 2015, and consists of the following three bills: (1) SB 1168; (2) AB 1739; and (3) SB 1319. The centerpiece of SGMA is the creation of local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) and the requirement that GSAs develop and implement "groundwater sustainability plans" for California's high- and medium-priority basins by the deadlines set forth in the Act. As discussed above, a portion of the Project site within the Pleasant Valley Groundwater Basin (DWR Basin 4-006) which is classified as a high priority basin that exhibits critical conditions of overdraft. As such, the requirements of SGMA apply to the basin. Fox Canyon Groundwater Management Agency is the GSA for the Pleasant Valley Basin and has prepared and adopted the "Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Pleasant Valley Basin" (GSP). (FCGMA, 2019). The purpose of the GSP is to define the conditions under which the groundwater resources of the entire Pleasant Valley Basin will be managed sustainably in the future.

California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA)

Section 3503, "Surface Mining and Reclamation Practice," of SMARA regulations identify minimum acceptable practices to be followed in surface mining operations, including the following related to hydrology and water quality:

(a) Soil Erosion Control.

(1) The removal of vegetation and overburden, if any, in advance of surface mining shall be kept to the minimum.

(2) Stockpiles of overburden and minerals shall be managed to minimize water and wind erosion.

(3) Erosion control facilities such as retarding basins, ditches, streambank stabilization, and diking shall be constructed and maintained where necessary to control erosion.

(b) Water Quality and Watershed Control.

(1) Settling ponds or basins shall be constructed to prevent potential sedimentation of streams at operations where they will provide a significant benefit to water quality.

(2) Operations shall be conducted to substantially prevent siltation of ground-water recharge areas.

(d) Disposal of Mine Waste Rock and Overburden. Permanent piles or dumps of mine waste rock and overburden shall be stable and shall not restrict the natural drainage without suitable provisions for diversion.

(e) Erosion and Drainage. Grading and revegetation shall be designed to minimize erosion and to convey surface runoff to natural drainage courses or interior basins designed for water storage. Basins that will store water during periods of surface runoff shall be designed to prevent erosion of spillways when these basins have outlet to lower ground.

Section 3706, "Performance Standards for Drainage, Diversion Structures, Waterways, and Erosion Control," of SMARA regulations identify performance standards for surface mining and reclamation:

(a) Surface mining and reclamation activities shall be conducted to protect on-site and downstream beneficial uses of water in accordance with the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, Water Code section 13000, et seq., and the Federal Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. section 1251, et seq.

(b) The quality of water, recharge potential, and storage capacity of ground water aquifers which are the source of water for domestic, agricultural, or other uses dependent on the water, shall not be diminished, except as allowed in the approved reclamation plan.

(c) Erosion and sedimentation shall be controlled during all phases of construction, operation, reclamation, and closure of a surface mining operation to minimize siltation of lakes and watercourses, as required by the Regional Water Quality Control Board or the State Water Resources Control Board.

(d) Surface runoff and drainage from surface mining activities shall be controlled by berms, silt fences, sediment ponds, revegetation, hay bales, or other erosion control measures, to ensure that surrounding land and water resources are protected from erosion, gullying, sedimentation and contamination. Erosion control methods shall be designed to handle runoff from not less than the 20 year/1 hour intensity storm event.

(e) Where natural drainages are covered, restricted, rerouted, or otherwise impacted by surface mining activities, mitigating alternatives shall be proposed and specifically approved in the reclamation plan to assure that runoff shall not cause increased erosion or sedimentation.

(f) When stream diversions are required, they shall be constructed in accordance with:

(1) the stream and lake alteration agreement between the operator and the Department of Fish and [Wildlife]; and

(2) the requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act, Sections 301 (33 U.S.C. 1311) and Section 404 (33 U.S.C. 1344) and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. 403).

(g) When no longer needed to achieve the purpose for which they were authorized, all temporary stream channel diversions shall be removed and the affected land reclaimed.

Ventura County General Plan

The Water Resources Element of the "Ventura County 2040 General Plan" (Ventura County, 2020) contains seven goals and several related policies associated with the development and protection of groundwater and surface water resources and water supplies in the County. General Plan policies associated with water resources potentially applicable to the Project are identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR.

3.10.2 Impact Analysis

3.10.2.1 Significance Thresholds

Ventura County ISAG

The Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) identifies that the following issues should be considered for potential impacts associated with Water Resources. Each of these issues and relevant thresholds as specified in the ISAG have been considered and are addressed as applicable in the impacts discussed in Section 3.10.2.2, below. 2a. Water Resources – Groundwater Quantity

2b. Water Resources – Groundwater Quality

2c. Water Resources – Surface Water Quantity

2d. Water Resources – Surface Water Quality

17a. Hydraulic Hazards – non-FEMA

17b. Hydraulic Hazards – FEMA

28a. Water Supply Quality

28b. Water Supply Quantity

28c. Water Supply Fire Flow Requirements

31a. Flood Control Facilities/Watercourses – Watershed Protection District

31b. Flood Control Facilities/Watercourses – Other Facilities

CEQA Guidelines

In addition to thresholds for the ISAG items listed above, the impact assessment considers the evaluation criteria for Hydrology and Water Quality as identified in the Environmental Checklist in Appendix G of the CEQA. The Appendix G criteria address whether a Project would:

a) violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality;
b) substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin;
c) substantially alter the existing drainage patterns of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would:
    i. result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site;
    ii. substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or off-site;
    iii. create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff; or
    iv. impede or redirect flood flows;
d) in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation; or

e) conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan.

3.10.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact WR-1: Project groundwater consumption could affect the quantity of groundwater available at and adjacent to the Project site. (ISAG 2a, 28b and CEQA b) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Under the proposed Project, the Applicant would use the existing onsite water well to provide potable water to service the 24-hour security trailer and restrooms. The Applicant estimates that up to 1,500 gallons of water a month would be used from the well for these potable uses. The security trailer is not currently present at the site, and County records indicate that the well is abandoned. Thus, use of the well to provide potable water for the security trailer and restrooms represents a new groundwater use associated with the proposed Project. Testing of the well conducted in 2004 indicated that it could sustain a pumping rate of 10 gpm which is sufficient to provide the proposed use.

The Project site is located adjacent to the Pleasant Valley Basin, which is a high-priority, critically overdrafted groundwater basin. As a result, any future water use from within the Pleasant Valley Basin would be subject to the requirements of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Pleasant Valley Basin (FCGMA, 2019). However, records indicate that the well is outside of the Pleasant Valley Basin boundary and the very low yield determined by the 2004 pump test indicate that the well accesses groundwater from the fractured Conejo Volcanics bedrock unit and not the Pleasant Valley Groundwater Basin. According to the ISAG (threshold 2a.4), any land use or project that would result in 1.0 acre-foot, or less, of net annual increase in groundwater extraction is not considered to have a significant or cumulative impact on groundwater quantity. The proposed used of up to 1,500 gallons of groundwater per month from the well would result in annual groundwater extraction of up to 18,000 gallons which is less than 0.6 acre feet. Thus, based on the ISAG screening threshold of 1.0 acre-foot, impacts to groundwater quantity associated with the Project's groundwater consumption would be less than significant. However, in the absence of assurances that groundwater consumption would not exceed 1.0 acre-feet per year, this impact is considered potentially significant. To ensure the Project does not exceed the 1.0 acre-foot significance threshold and to ensure compliance with County regulations applicable to the existing well on the property, the County has identified mitigation measure MM WR-1 to provide a mechanism for the Operator to annually report groundwater use that may be associated with onsite operations and to ensure that the existing onsite well is in compliance with Ventura County Ordinance No. 4468, Section 4812, requirements for abandoned wells including destruction of such wells pursuant to Section 4819 or that the abandoned well be returned to active status in the manner provided in Section 4820. Implementation of MM WR-1 would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact WR-1

MM WR-1: *The Permittee shall submit to the Public Works Agency (PWA) a report of the volume of groundwater extracted, as measured by flowmeter if so equipped, or other reasonable means, and the total time the well was operated within the preceding twelve (12) months. In addition, for water wells constructed to allow access for water level measuring, the static water level in each water well shall be measured and reported annually. Any results from a completed aquifer pump test, or groundwater quality data collected shall also be reported. If a well is classified as abandoned, as defined in Ventura County*

Ordinance No. 4468, Section 4812, a certificate of exemption shall be obtained or the well may be returned to active status by completing a well condition inspection report in the manner provided in Section 4820, or the well shall be destroyed as required by Section 4819.

Impact WR-2: Project mining and reclamation activities would create the potential to adversely affect groundwater and surface water quality. (ISAG 2b, 28a and CEQA a and e). (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Current and future mining of the volcanic bedrock involves the use of blasting agents, including ANFO. The use of ANFO has the potential to contaminate groundwater with nitrates and other chemicals, such as petroleum hydrocarbons.

Use of petroleum hydrocarbons and other chemicals for equipment operation and maintenance have the potential to impact surface water and groundwater quality if not managed and stored properly. Mobile fueling trucks are used for the heavy equipment while on-road vehicles are fueled offsite. Existing and planned operations require the use and onsite storage of fuel, lubricants and other materials listed below. These materials are delivered by truck and stored onsite in drums/containers within sea cargo containers.

- Gear Oil
- Antifreeze
- Waste Antifreeze 35 gallons Ethylene Glycol
- Oxygen
- Mineral Spirits
- Petroleum Grease
- Hydraulic Oil
- Hydraulic Fluid
- Crankcase Oil-76 Guardol QLT 15-40
- Transmission Fluid
- Waste Oil
- Gear Lubricant
- Red Diesel
- Acetylene
- Waste Aqueous Cleaning Solution
- Engine/Motor Oil
- Menopa ISO 32
- Petroleum Grease
- Rockdrill Oil

Additionally, the existing operation involves the use of explosives to lift and loosen exposed bedrock. These materials are regulated by the Ventura County Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA). Explosives and materials are housed in onsite bunkers and include the following:

- Detonator (500 pounds, Pentaerythritoietranitrate)
- Prima Cord/Detonating Cord (500 pounds, Ammonium Nitrate, Sodium Nitrate, Petroleum Hydrocarbons Aluminum AL)
- Shamrock 1 (45,000 pounds Ammonium Nitrate)
- Detonator Caps (500 pounds)
- Blasting Agent (2,000 pounds Ammonium Nitrate)
- Magnafrac Plus HW (900 pounds Ammonium Nitrate, Sodium Nitrate, Aluminum [Fume or Dust])
- Red D Prime Clay (1,000 pounds Ammonium Nitrate, Sodium Nitrate, Petroleum Hydrocarbons)

Environmental risks associated with ANFO are influenced by the type of soil, the depth of the groundwater, presence of surface water, and the amount and infiltration rates of precipitation (Degnan et al., 2016). ANFO can pose a significant risk to groundwater and in groundwater, can be a source of nitrogen as ammonium (NH^4) and nitrate (NO^{3-}) contamination. Mechanisms that can result in release of nitrates to the environment from blasting agents include:

1) spillage during transport;
2) dissolution (leaching) of explosives agents in "wet" blast holes; and
3) undetonated explosives agents remaining in the rock following the blast.

The use of fuels, chemicals, blasting agents and other hazardous materials during mining operations is a potential threat to water quality. Although these materials are used under existing operations, the expanded mine area and increased operations for additional aggregate production and for concrete and asphalt recycling associated with the Project would increase the potential for accidental discharge of materials that could contaminate groundwater and/or surface waters.

The existing business maintains an active permit to operate (permit number FA0005395) issued by Ventura County Environmental Health Division (EHD)/Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA). A Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) for reportable hazardous materials was electronically submitted to the California Environmental Reporting System (CERS) on February 6, 2019 (CERS lD 10490221). Applicant is required to update the HMBP in CERS with any changes to remain in compliance with state law and to facilitate emergency responders during incident. Improper storage, handling, and disposal of potentially hazardous materials would result in the creation of adverse impacts to the environment. Existing business also has a hazardous waste generator EPA lD number issued by Department of Toxic Substances Control (CAL000249992). Improper storage, handling, and disposal of these wastes may result in the creation of adverse impacts to the environment. Compliance with applicable state and local regulations will reduce potential Project-specific and cumulative impacts related to the potential for hazardous materials to adversely affect water quality to less than significant levels. (Lustig, 2019)

Mitigation measure MM WR-2(a) outlines the requirement for compliance with applicable hazardous materials regulatory requirements; MM WR-2(b) provides measures to minimize potential water quality impacts associated with blasting; and MM WR-2(c) provides measures to minimize potential water quality impacts associated with vehicle and equipment maintenance. Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact WR-2

MM WR-2(a): *The Permittee shall submit a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) to the Environmental Health Division/Certified Unified Program Agency (Ventura CUPA) for storage of hazardous materials above reporting thresholds (200 cubic feet gas, 55 gallons liquid, 500 pounds solid). lf hazardous wastes are generated the Permittee shall obtain and maintain in active status, an EPA lD number issued by the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. Wastes identified as "non-hazardous" may require waste determination analysis to confirm if wastes are listed hazardous wastes, exhibits a hazardous characteristic through testing, or application of general knowledge. A completed HMBP shall be submitted to the Ventura CUPA electronically through the California Environmental Reporting System (CERS). The Permittee shall maintain all records of hazardous waste determination testing and disposal and make available for review by this Ventura CUPA staff upon request. The HMBP*

shall be submitted through CERS annually, and whenever there is a change to the type, quantity, or location of the hazardous materials. EPA ID number shall be renewed annually. Verification of hazardous materials inventory as well as ongoing compliance with requirements will be accomplished through field inspection by Ventura CUPA staff.

MM WR-2(b): *The Permittee shall comply with the following for all blasting associated with the Project:*

1. *Handling of all blasting agents shall be limited to qualified and licensed blasting contractors at all times.*
2. *All blasting products shall be stored only in approved containers, specifically designed for the safe keeping of explosives.*
3. *Any spillage of ANFO or other explosives shall be immediately cleaned up, and properly disposed of in strict accordance with applicable state and federal regulations.*
4. *The type of ANFO agent selected shall be appropriate for the specific environmental conditions.*
5. *Blast holes shall be inspected prior to placement of the ANFO to determine water is present. In cases where the boreholes have standing water or are moist, no material shall be placed into the holes until dry conditions are observed.*
6. *Blast designs and loading controls shall be reviewed to minimize the length of explosive columns, select proper stemming and to ensure to optimize complete detonation.*
7. *A current inventory of the types and quantities, along with Material Safety Data Sheets, shall be maintained onsite by qualified personnel. Relevant information shall be included in the site's pollution prevention plans, including the Hazardous Materials Business Plan and Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.*

MM WR-2(c): *All onsite vehicle and equipment maintenance shall be conducted on an impermeable pad area with adequate perimeter containment (including sufficient capacity for any direct rainfall) to prevent any spills from leaving the pad and reaching bare soils. Onsite fuel trucks used for vehicle and equipment fueling in locations other than the impermeable maintenance area shall be equipped with appropriate spill containment equipment at all times.*

Impact WR-3: The Project could adversely affect surface water quality due to increased runoff, erosion, siltation, and inadequate stormwater storage capacity. (ISAG 2d, 17a, 17b, 31a, 31b and CEQA c) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Enlargement of the steep (1:1 horizontal to vertical) quarry sidewalls and creation of additional compacted soils on the active and reclaimed quarry floor would result in the potential for increased stormwater runoff. The additional or existing runoff could also cause erosion and sediment transport on the Project site, and resulting siltation and sedimentation in onsite and offsite basins and ponds. The most recent hydrology study prepared for the site and submitted with the April 1, 2019, application (Holmes Enterprises, Inc., Hydrology Analysis, 01/07/19) indicates that runoff during a 24-hour, 100-year storm from the Project site and upgradient areas under mined conditions would be 35.40 acre-feet. Holmes (2019) discusses that the Applicant/Operator has added five additional retention basins on the site that have an overall detention capacity of 57.61 acre-feet. According to Holmes (2019), "the expanded mining areas to the north and south will be shaped in such a way that the runoff from those areas will enter the detention basins" and that "additional detention basins can be created, if needed."

In addition to capturing runoff in onsite basins, the Applicant proposes to further minimize the potential for erosion and to control the sediment through implementation of the following Best Management Practices (BMPs):

- The site will be graded to direct storm water away from areas with high erosion potential.
- The site plan configuration and gradient will provide for low-velocity, non-scour conditions at the desilting basing prior to discharge to the pond.
- Sand or gravel bags will be used, as needed, to prevent erosion and retain water on site.
- The desilting basin will be maintained to capture sediment.

Controlling and capturing stormwater runoff in onsite basins and avoiding release of stormwater runoff to offsite areas would minimize the potential for increased site runoff, erosion, siltation, and inadequate stormwater capacity. Mitigation measure MM WR-3 requires additional hydrology studies and verification of onsite stormwater conveyance and containment facilities to ensure the Project design and onsite stormwater controls and basins are sufficient to reduce this potential impact to less than significant. Implementation of MM WR-3 would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact WR-3:

MM WR-3: *Prior to disturbance in mine expansion areas, the Permittee shall prepare and submit an engineering grading and drainage plan (drainage plan) for review and approval by the County, and the Permittee shall develop and maintain all stormwater facilities as specified in the drainage plan through the life of the Operation and until site reclamation is complete. The drainage plan shall be prepared by a California-licensed civil engineer with expertise in hydrology and shall address runoff conditions and stormwater conveyance and containment requirements for the following storm events: 10-yr, 24-hr; 20-yr, 1-hr (as required by SMARA); and 100-yr, 24-hr. The drainage plan shall calculate stormwater runoff using runoff coefficients and other parameters that are consistent with the Ventura County Design Hydrology Manual and are acceptable to the County. The drainage study shall address current conditions, proposed operating (i.e. mining) conditions under maximum proposed disturbance, and final reclaimed conditions. The drainage study shall identify the size, capacity, and location of all existing and proposed stormwater retention basins and provide evidence that the basins are designed with sufficient capacity to retain all stormwater runoff from the site and upgradient areas for the maximum storm event, with at least two feet of freeboard, and capable of retaining the annual runoff from a 100-yr rainfall year. Stormwater retention facilities to be used to meet this mitigation requirement shall not be located within the FEMA-defined 100-yr flood hazard area. The drainage study shall also provide evidence that all onsite stormwater conveyances are appropriately sized and designed to convey the calculated flows. If the hydrology analysis for the drainage plan indicates that the runoff velocities could exceed 6 feet per second, then the drainage plan shall also identify energy dissipation and sedimentation capacity to minimize erosion onsite and prevent sediment transport.*

No later than September 1 of each year, the Permittee shall inspect each stormwater retention basin to confirm that it has the retention capacity to hold the design runoff and has not lost capacity due to sedimentation. Observations of the banks, berms, and other structures that are necessary to maintain the required freeboard shall also to be conducted to verify that these structures have not experienced erosion, rilling, or slope failure. If the inspection indicates that any component of the stormwater retention facilities does not meet its intended function (e.g. due to sedimentation, erosion, slope failure, etc), then the Permittee shall prepare a corrective action plan to address the adverse conditions and bring the facilities

into compliance by October 1 of that year. Documentation of the inspection findings, along with any proposed or implemented corrective actions, shall be submitted to the County by September 15 of each year. Verification of completion of corrective actions, if applicable, shall be submitted to the County by October 15 of each year.

Impact WR-4: The Project's increased use of reclaimed wastewater would reduce the quantity of surface water available for beneficial uses downstream within Conejo Creek and Calleguas Creek. (ISAG 2c) (Less than Significant)

Water use associated with the existing operation is primarily for dust control on roadways and the active mining area, and for spray bars at the crushing and sorting plant. Current water use is estimated by the Applicant at 30,000 gallons per day and a total of 27.9 acre-feet per year (Sespe Consulting, Inc., April 1, 2019 – Project Description). (This analysis addresses water use associated with mining and reclamation activities and does not address agricultural irrigation water use on the site which would remain unchanged from existing conditions.) The water supply for existing operations consists of recycled wastewater provided to the Applicant under an agreement with the Camarillo Sanitary District (CSD). Under the Project, the Applicant estimates that use of recycled non-potable wastewater from the CSD WWTP would increase by 55.6 acre-feet per year, resulting in an annual usage of 83.5 acre-feet per year during the duration of mining. Once mining is completed, water use would decrease to below existing levels or cease completely, as no water use for reclamation or post-reclamation is identified. The additional 55.6 acre-feet of water for the proposed Project would not be diverted from an existing creek or other jurisdictional surface water body. However, it would be water that would otherwise be released to Conejo Creek or diverted for irrigation use on other properties, as under existing conditions.

Recycled non-potable water from the CSD WWTP that is not conveyed to a specific use is released to Conejo Creek, which flows into Calleguas Creek. The City of Thousand Oaks and the Camrosa Water District also discharge treated wastewater to Conejo Creek and/or Calleguas Creek (Parsons Engineering Science, 1999). According to the CSD (2019), the WWTP treats approximately 4,000,000 gallons per day, which is equivalent to approximately 4,500 acre-feet per year. Approximately 900 acre-feet per year of the treated wastewater is reclaimed for irrigation use (CSD, 2019). The increase of 55.6 acre-feet per year of water that would be used under the proposed Project is about 1.2 percent of the total water treated by the CSD each year.

According to the Water Quality Control Plan for the Coastal Watersheds of Los Angeles and Ventura Counties (RWQCB, 2019), also known as the Basin Plan, the beneficial uses of Conejo Creek downstream of the Project site (Calleguas-Conejo Watershed Reach 9A) and in the reach of Calleguas Creek downstream of Conejo Creek (Calleguas-Conejo Watershed Reach 3) include:

- IND—industrial service supply;
- PROC—industrial process supply;
- AGR—agricultural supply;
- GWR—groundwater recharge;
- WARM—warm freshwater habitat; and
- WILD—wildlife habitat.

The increased water use associated with the Project would potentially reduce the amount of water released to Conejo Creek and could affect beneficial uses within Conejo Creek and Calleguas Creek. However, the Project's water use would represent a small portion of the total amount of treated wastewater potentially released to Conejo Creek each year. Industrial and irrigation water are provided directly to users from the CSD WWTP, so the additional use for the Project would not affect these beneficial uses of the surface water within the creeks. Furthermore, the Project's water use would not significantly alter the amount of surface water flows available for warm freshwater and wildlife habitat in Conejo Creek and Calleguas Creek due to releases from the CSD and other jurisdictions upstream and downstream of the Project site.

The increased water use for the Project could reduce the amount of water that recharges the high priority, critically overdrafted Pleasant Valley Groundwater Basin. However, the increased water use for the Project of 55.6 acre-feet per year is considered to be a *de minimis* amount compared to the volume of groundwater in storage and the annual recharge (6,564 acre-feet per year [FCGMA, 2019; Table 2-9]) and annual extraction (15,671 acre-feet per year [FCGMA, 2019; Table 2-10]).

As a result of these factors, the Project's increased water use as compared to existing conditions would not be expected to adversely affect the availability of water for other beneficial uses identified in the Basin Plan; therefore, this impact is considered less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact WR-4

None required.

Impact WR-5: The Project requires a long-term, reliable source of water. (ISAG 28b) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

As discussed in Chapter 3 and above in this section, the Applicant proposes to obtain approximately 0.56 acre-feet per year of potable water for the proposed 24-hour security trailer from the onsite well or other approved water source, and to obtain up to 55.6 acre-feet per year of additional recycled water for the Project from the CSD. Impacts associated with the use of these water sources are addressed above in Impacts WR-1 and WR-4 and found to be less than significant with incorporation of identified mitigation measures.

Section 4.4 of the application Project Description (Sespe, 2019a) notes that a water quality and water well pump and recovery test are needed to verify the sufficiency of the domestic water supply for the security trailer. Because groundwater can contain contaminants harmful to human health, the quality of this proposed water supply source must also be verified. In the absence of these tests and results confirming the adequacy of this water supply, the availability of potable water for the proposed security trailer cannot be verified.

According to the CSD Wastewater Master Plan (Parsons Engineering Science, 1999), provision of reclaimed wastewater to the offsite pond just west of the Project site was previously based on a 1955 agreement between the CSD and the property owners at that time , and the 1955 agreement was replaced by a new agreement in 1977. Under the 1977 agreement, the CSD shall "endeavor" to keep the water supply pond full and maximize deliveries of water. However, the agreement stipulates that there are no guaranteed minimum deliveries (Parsons Engineering Science, 1999). In the absence of a guaranteed minimum delivery sufficient to provide the required water demand for operations under the proposed Project (including the existing use of 27.9 acre-feet per year and the proposed

increase of 55.6 acre-feet per year for a total of 83.5 acre-feet per year), the available of water required for operations, much of which is required for dust suppression, cannot be verified.

To ensure sufficient water supply for operations under the proposed Project, mitigation measure MM WR-5 requires the Applicant to provide verification that the Project's operational demand for water will not exceed the volume of water available to the Project. Implementation of MM WR-5 would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact WR-5:

MM WR-5(a): *Prior to installation of the proposed 24-hour security trailer, the Permittee shall provide a water quality and water well pump and recovery test to the County verifying the sufficiency of this water supply. For use of the onsite well for the proposed domestic purposes, the Permittee shall obtain a Certification of Water Quality approval from the Ventura County Environmental Health Division prior to building permit issuance for the security trailer. The Permittee's use of the well shall conform with the Ventura County Building Code. During the operational life of the Project, the Permittee shall conduct periodic monitoring/testing of the water well for compliance with drinking water standards and submit the results to the County.*

MM WR-5(b): *Prior to Project operations, the Permittee shall provide the County with written verification that operations will cease if the minimum amount of water required for daily operations (e.g., dust suppression) is not available. Operations may resume when an adequate water supply is reestablished or alternative water supply is approved by the County.*

Impact WR-6: The Project must meet fire flow requirements as determined by the Ventura County Waterworks manual or the Ventura County Fire Protection District Fire Code. (ISAG 28c) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

Expansion of mining to additional areas of the site and the use of additional equipment (e.g., concrete and asphalt recycling facilities) could result in an increased potential for onsite fires as compared to existing conditions. The required fire flow requirements, including water storage, pump capacities, and access to water during a fire emergency, have not been estimated by the Applicant or determined by the County at this time. The potential for insufficient fire flow capacity is consider a potentially significant impact. To ensure sufficient fire flow capacity is provided at the site, MM WR-6 requires the Applicant to design and provide for fire water storage and flow capacity consistent with County requirements. Implementation of MM WR-6 would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact WR-6:

MM WR-6: *Prior to Project operations, the Permittee shall design and install sufficient storage and facilities for the provision of water for fire suppression at the site in accordance with specifications and requirements determined by the County. County requirements may include, but will not be limited to, the Permittee's submittal of written verification of water supply sufficient for on-site fire suppression.*

Impact WR-7: The Project could release pollutants, including sediment, due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones. (CEQA d) (Less than Significant)

A small portion of the along the western edge of the existing CUP area is located within a FEMA flood hazard zone. The Project site is located over 7.5 miles from the Pacific Ocean and is more than

one hundred feet above sea level. Therefore, there is no potential for inundation by a tsunami. A seiche is a standing wave within an enclosed water body that may be caused by seismic waves or sustained winds. Under certain conditions, the offsite pond located just west of the Project site could be subject to the formation of a seiche. However, the elevations west of the pond are lower than the elevations on the Project site. Therefore, if a seiche were to occur in the pond and cause water to inundate surrounding areas, the inundation would preferentially occur in the lower elevation areas outside of the Project boundary. Furthermore, the Project would not create an increased potential for either tsunami or seiche and would not create conditions that would cause an increased risk associated with tsunami or seiche to offsite areas. Thus, the potential impacts associated with tsunamis and seiches is less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact WR-7:

None required.

3.10.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative projects discussed in Section 3.1.5 are would have limited to no potential for water resources impacts, and the Project would not create the potential for substantial contribution to cumulative water resources impacts.

3.10.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies, including those associated with water resources, is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

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SECTION 3.11 – HAZARDS AND PUBLIC SAFETY

SECTION 3.11–HAZARDS AND PUBLIC SAFETY

This section provides an evaluation of potential impacts of the Project associated with hazardous materials, hazards, and public safety. Issues addressed in this section include use and disposal of hazardous materials and hazardous waste, public health associated with onsite portable toilets, public health associated with potable water supply, onsite sewage disposal, solid waste disposal, vectors/mosquitos, hazards associated with blasting and potential public access and exposure to mining and processing areas, and fire hazards. Potential impacts associated with police and fire protection services are also addressed. Additional hazards and public health and safety issues are addressed in other sections of this EIR, including potential impacts associated with landslides and slope stability, faulting and seismicity, liquefaction, subsidence, and expansive soils (Section 3.7, "Geology and Soils"); potential flooding and water quality issues (Section 3.10, "Water Resources"); noise (Section 3.8, "Noise and Vibration"), and air quality (Section 3.4, "Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases").

3.11.1 Setting

3.11.1.1 Environmental Setting

Hazardous Materials

Hazardous materials are materials that, because of their quantity, concentration, physical or chemical characteristics, pose a significant present or potential hazard to human health and safety or to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment. Hazardous materials include, but are not limited to, hazardous substances, hazardous waste, and any material that the administering agency or Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) determines to be potentially injurious to the health and safety of persons or harmful to the environment if released into the workplace or the environment.

The existing business maintains an active permit to operate (permit number FA0005395) issued by Ventura County Environmental Health Division (EHD)/Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA). A Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) for reportable hazardous materials was electronically submitted to the California Environmental Reporting System (CERS) on February 6, 2019 (CERS lD 10490221). Applicant is required to update the HMBP in CERS with any changes to remain in compliance with state law and to facilitate emergency responders during incident. Improper storage, handling, and disposal of potentially hazardous materials would result in the creation of adverse impacts to the environment. Existing business also has a hazardous waste generator EPA lD number issued by Department of Toxic Substances Control (CAL000249992). (Lustig, 2019)

Existing mining and processing operations at the Project site use and store fuel, lubricants and other materials listed below. These materials are delivered by truck and stored onsite in drums/containers within sea cargo containers.

- Gear Oil
- Antifreeze
- Waste Antifreeze 35 gallons Ethylene Glycol
- Oxygen
- Mineral Spirits
- Petroleum Grease
- Transmission Fluid
- Waste Oil
- Gear Lubricant
- Red Diesel
- Acetylene
- Waste Aqueous Cleaning Solution
- Engine/Motor Oil

- Hydraulic Oil
- Hydraulic Fluid
- Crankcase Oil-76 Guardol QLT 15-40
- Menopa ISO 32
- Petroleum Grease
- Rockdrill Oil

The existing operation also involves the use of explosives to lift and loosen exposed bedrock. Explosives and materials are housed in onsite bunkers. The use of explosives and blasting materials is regulated by a combination of federal, state, and local agencies and regulations, and at the local level are regulated by the Ventura County CUPA. Blasting materials used at the site include the following:

- Detonator (500 pounds, Pentaerythritoietranitrate)
- Prima Cord/Detonating Cord (500 pounds, Ammonium Nitrate, Sodium Nitrate, Petroleum Hydrocarbons Aluminum AL)
- Shamrock 1 (45,000 pounds Ammonium Nitrate)
- Detonator Caps (500 pounds)
- Blasting Agent (2,000 pounds Ammonium Nitrate)
- Magnafrac Plus HW (900 pounds Ammonium Nitrate, Sodium Nitrate, Aluminum [Fume or Dust])
- Red D Prime Clay (1,000 pounds Ammonium Nitrate, Sodium Nitrate, Petroleum Hydrocarbons)

Police Services

The Ventura County Sheriff's Office Patrol Services Division provides police protection and emergency services within unincorporated areas of Ventura County and the cities of Camarillo, Fillmore, Moorpark, Ojai, and Thousand Oaks. The Patrol Services Division also includes a Mounted Unit, K-9 Unit, Sheriff's Communications Center, and the Office of Emergency Services. The division patrols 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, providing law enforcement, citizen assistance, and response to emergency situations. The Patrol Services station nearest the Project site is located at 3701 East Las Posas Road in Camarillo, approximately 7 miles (driving distance) and 12 minutes from the Project site entrance.

Fire Protection Services and Wildland Fires

The Ventura County Fire Department is responsible for the protection of lives and property within Ventura County. The Department's area of jurisdiction includes all unincorporated areas of Ventura County along with the cities of Camarillo, Moorpark, Ojai, Port Hueneme, Santa Paula, Simi Valley, and Thousand Oaks. The Fire Prevention Bureau is responsible for developing and implementing programs and policies that prevent or reduce the magnitude of emergency occurrences, such as loss of life and property, personal injury or environmental damage. The Ventura County Fire Department oversees a Wildland Fire Action Plan which includes a Fire Hazard Reduction Program (FHRP) that provides specifications for property owners to maintain property free of fire hazards and nuisance vegetation. The Ventura County Fire Code contains the specific requirements of the FHRP as well as other requirements pertaining to fire prevention.

Ventura County Fire Station 54 is located at 2160 Pickwick Drive in Camarillo, approximately 5.1 miles (driving distance) and 10 minutes from the Project site entrance. Ventura County Fire Station 32 (Potrero) is located at 830 S. Reino Road in Newbury Park, approximately 3 miles (driving distance) and 7 minutes from the residences nearest the southern portion of the Project site at the northern terminus of Via Pisa; however, vehicle access to the southern perimeter of the site is not available from area. Potential emergency vehicle access to the upper southern, eastern, and northern perimeter of the site may be available from utility corridor dirt access roads south and east of the site; however, these unpaved roads are narrow with

tight-radius turns and steep grades that could substantially restrict emergency vehicle access and delay response times.

As shown on Figure 3.11-1, "Project Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones," the Project site is located in areas designated as "Moderate" and "Very High" fire hazard severity by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention (CalFire). Areas within the site designated "Moderate" fire hazard severity are generally associated with areas that have been previously mined and contain limited vegetation for potential wildland fire fuel sources. Areas within the site designated "Very High" fire hazard severity are generally associated with areas of the site having less or no previous mining-related disturbance and contain more cover vegetation. Also as shown on Figure 3.11-1, much of the unincorporated County areas to the west, south, and east of the site are also designated as "Very High" fire hazard severity. Wildland fires have occurred in the Project vicinity and, as recently as 2018, have resulted in significant damage and risk of life and property.

Potential fire ignition sources at the Project site under existing conditions include internal combustion engines, blasting, electrical equipment and connections, light and heat sources, improper disposal of cigarettes, and other activities with the potential to generate heat, flame, or sparks from equipment maintenance (e.g., welding) and other activities.

3.11.1.2 Regulatory Framework

Hazardous Materials

Federal Regulation

The primary federal agencies with responsibility for hazardous materials management include the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). Federal laws governing the transport, storage, and use of hazardous materials include the following:

- Resources Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA): hazardous waste management;
- Hazardous and Solid Waste Amendments Act (HSWA): hazardous waste management;
- Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA): cleanup of contamination;
- Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA): cleanup of contamination;
- Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know (SARA Title III): business inventories and emergency response planning;
- Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA): tracks and screens industrial chemicals; and
- Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA): controls pesticide distribution, sale, and use.

State Regulation

The California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA) has established regulations governing the use of hazardous materials in the State. Within Cal/EPA, the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) has primary hazardous materials regulatory responsibility, but can delegate enforcement responsibilities to local jurisdictions that enter into agreements with DTSC, for the generation, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials.

To coordinate emergency services provided by local, state, and federal agencies, California has developed an Emergency Response Plan pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act (Government Code §8550 *et seq*.). The Plan is administered by Cal/OES. Local agencies are required to develop area plans for an organized response to releases of hazardous materials that are dependent on Business Plans submitted by handlers of hazardous materials and waste within that agency's area. Pursuant to California Health and Safety Code §25503(a) and California Public Safety Code CCR §2729, any business handling hazardous material must establish and implement a Hazardous Materials Business Plan. These Business Plans are then submitted to the local administering agency.

In January 1996, Cal/EPA adopted regulations implementing a "Unified Hazardous Waste and Hazardous Materials Management Regulatory Program" (Unified Program). The six program elements of the Unified Program are hazardous waste generators and hazardous waste on-site treatment, underground storage tanks, above-ground storage tanks, hazardous material release response plans and inventories, risk management and prevention programs, and Unified Fire Code hazardous materials management plans and inventories. The Unified Program is implemented at the local level.

Also within Cal/EPA, the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) is responsible for protecting the public's health and safety and the environment through management of the solid waste generated in California. Solid waste regulations are generally enforced through local enforcement agencies (usually county agencies).

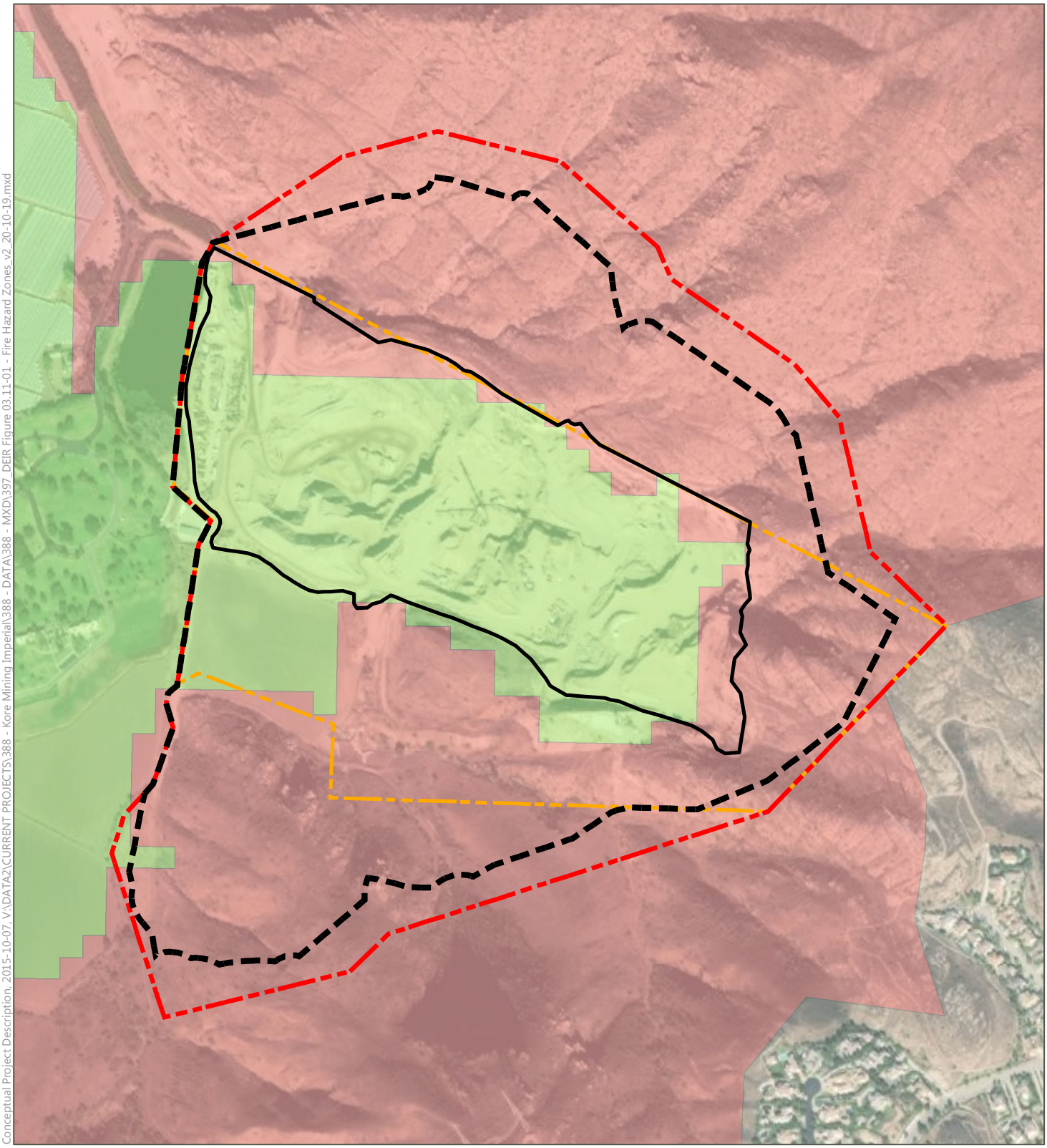
The California Highway Patrol (CHP) and Caltrans are the enforcement agencies for hazardous materials transportation regulations. California OSHA (Cal/OSHA) assumes primary responsibility for developing and enforcing workplace safety regulations within the state. (Cal/OSHA Division of Mining and Tunneling oversees regulations specific to mining operations.)

The California Office of Emergency Services (Cal/OES) is the state office responsible for establishing emergency response and spill notification plans related to hazardous materials accidents. In addition, Cal/OES regulates businesses by requiring specific businesses to prepare an inventory of hazardous materials, and to prepare risk management plans through the California Accidental Release Prevention Program (Title 19 of the CCR).

The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and the Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) regulate surface and groundwater quality according to the provisions of State and federal legislation including the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act, the Toxic Pits Cleanup Act, Underground Tank Law, and Clean Water Act. Generally, all petroleum-related sites are handled by the RWQCBs and all underground tank sites are managed by county environmental management agencies. The Project site is located within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles RWQCB. Additional discussion of water quality regulation in provided in Section 3.10, "Water Resources."

Ventura County General Plan

The Hazards and Safety Element of the "Ventura County 2040 General Plan" (Ventura County, 2020) contains several goals and related policies associated with hazards and safety, addressing Wildfire Hazards, Flood Hazards, Coastal Flooding, Geologic and Seismic Hazards, Hazardous Materials, Transportation Related Hazards, Oil and Gas Production, Military Compatibility, Noise, Air Quality, Increasing Temperatures, and Emergency Response. General Plan policies associated with hazards and safety potentially applicable to the Project are identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR.



Conceptual Project Description, 2015-10-07, V:\DATA2\CURRENT PROJECTS\388 - Kore Mining Imperial\388 - DATA\388 - MXD\397_DEIR Figure 03.11-01 - Fire Hazard Zones_v2_20-10-19.mxd

SOURCES: California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection State Responsibility Areas GIS Data, dowloaded in September of 2019; Aerial–DigitalGlobe (11-14-2018); compiled by Benchmark Resources in 2020

NOTES:

1. Fire Hazard Severity Zones are based on State Responsibility Zones.

- Existing Mine Area Boundary
- Proposed Mine Area Boundary
- Existing CUP Boundary
- Proposed CUP Boundary
- Fire Hazard Severity Zone - Moderate
- Fire Hazard Severity Zone - Very High

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 300 600 1,200 Feet

Project Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

Figure 3.11-1

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3.11.2 Impact Analysis

3.11.2.1 Significance Thresholds

This section provides an overview of the impact criteria and significance thresholds used to evaluation Project impacts associated with hazards and public safety issues based on the Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) and Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

Ventura County ISAG

The Ventura County ISAG includes the following issues pertaining to hazards and public safety:

ISAG 18—Fire Hazards

ISAG 19—Aviation Hazards (Airports)

ISAG 20a—Hazardous Materials/Waste – Materials

ISAG 20b—Hazardous Materials/Waste – Waste

ISAG 23—Public Health

ISAG 29a—Waste Treatment & Disposal Facilities – Individual Sewage Disposal Systems

ISAG 32—Law Enforcement/Emergency Services

ISAG 33a—Fire Protection Services - Distance and Response

ISAG 33b—Fire Protection Services – Personnel, Equipment, and Facilities

Regarding ISAG 19, the Project would not create the potential to create aviation hazards and this issue is eliminated from further consideration. Other ISAG items listed above are addressed in the impact analyses below.

CEQA

In addition to the ISAG items listed above, this impact assessment considers criteria identified in the "Hazards and Hazardous Materials" and "Wildfire" checklists in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, as listed below.

Hazards and Hazards Materials

a) create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials;

b) create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment;

c) emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school;

d) be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, create a significant hazard to the public or the environment;

e) for a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area;

f) impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan; or

g) expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.

Regarding item "c," the Project is not located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school. Regarding item "d," the Project is not a list of hazardous materials sites under Government Code Section 65962.5. Regarding item "e," the Project is not located within an airport land use plan area or within two miles of an airport. Regarding item "f," the Project is not within an area subject to an emergency evaluation plan and would not create the potential to interfere with emergency evacuation. Therefore, CEQA items "c," "d," "e," and "f," above, have been eliminated from further consideration. Items "a," "b," and "g" are addressed in the impact analyses below.

Wildfire

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

a) substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan;

b) due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to, pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire;

c) require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment; or

d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes.

3.11.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact HAZ-1: Improper storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials and waste could result in adverse impacts to the environment. (ISAG 20a and 20b, CEQA Hazardous Materials a) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The Project includes the continued operation of a mining facility which involves the storage of hazardous materials and the generation of hazardous wastes typically associated with mining activities, and as listed above in Section 3.11.1.1. The existing business maintains an active permit to operate (permit number FA0005395) issued by Ventura County Environmental Health Division (EHD)/ CUPA. A Hazardous Materials Business Plan (HMBP) for reportable hazardous materials was electronically submitted to the California Environmental Reporting System (CERS) on February 6, 2019 (CERS ID 10490221). The Applicant is required to update the HMBP in CERS with any changes to remain in compliance with state law and to facilitate emergency responders during incident. Improper storage, handling, and disposal of potentially hazardous materials would result in the creation of adverse impacts to the environment. The existing business also has a hazardous waste generator EPA ID number issued by DTSC (CAL000249992). Improper handling or disposal of wastes associated with Project operations and reclamation activities could result in the creation of adverse impacts to the environment. However, compliance with applicable state and local regulations would reduce potential Project-specific to less than significant levels. (Lustig, 2019)

Impact WR-2 in Section 3.10, "Water Resources," of this EIR provides additional discussion of the types of hazardous materials used on the site. As discussed at Impact WR-2, the use of petroleum hydrocarbons and other chemicals for equipment operation and maintenance have the potential to impact surface water and groundwater quality if not managed and stored properly. Mitigation measure MM WR-2(a) outlines the requirement for compliance with applicable hazardous materials regulatory requirements; MM WR-2(b) provides measures to minimize potential water quality impacts associated with blasting; and MM WR-2(c) provides measures to minimize potential water quality impacts associated with vehicle and equipment maintenance. Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce the potential for water quality impacts from the use of hazardous materials. MM WR-2 and compliance with existing regulations for the storage, handling, and disposal of hazardous materials would reduce the potential impact to less than significant, and no additional mitigation is required.

Mitigation for Impact HAZ-1:

MM HAZ-1: *Implement MM WR-2.*

Impact HAZ-2: The Project has the potential to impact public health associated with septage waste generation and disposal. (ISAG 23, 28a, 29a, and 29b) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The existing operation includes three portable restroom facilities. Two of the portable restrooms are located near the scale house and the third is located near the crushing/sorting plant. The Project would involve either continued use of the existing system or install a new onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) to service the proposed 24-hour security trailer. Ongoing use of the portable toilets could create a public health risk if not routinely cleaned and maintained, and pumped out regularly. Mitigation measure MM HAZ-2(a) provides requirements to ensure portable restrooms are properly maintained and would reduce the public health impact associated with portable restrooms to less than significant.

The Project proposes to install and use an onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) for domestic sewage disposal. The use of an OWTS has the potential to contaminate groundwater supplies. Percolation tests and soils reports submitted with the application provide an evaluation of a "modular restroom," and indicate the site is suitable for the proposed OWTS. (JCR, 2019) Although the application provides information indicating design and soils conditions are suitable for an OWTS, the County considers this information preliminary and JCR 2019 notes that, "the proposed septic tank and disposal area could be reduced in size," suggesting that a final proposed design is not complete. Thus, the County would require additional studies and design detail prior to issuance of a permit for the OWTS. Improperly constructed and poorly maintained OWTS have the potential to cause substantial and widespread nutrient and microbial contamination to groundwater. The potential for public health effects associated with an improperly design, constructed, and/or maintained OWTS is considered a potentially significant impact for this analysis.

Mitigation measure MM HAZ-2(b) requires a full evaluation of the specifically proposed OWTS for review and approval by Environmental Health Division (EHD) Liquid Waste Program staff during the plan review and construction permitting process. EHD Liquid Waste Program staff will review and verify all relevant documentation, including but not limited to: geotechnical report, system design calculations, compliance with local building codes, and historic geological data for the area.

Implementation of MM HAZ-2 and conformance with the County Building Code Ordinance, state OWTS policy, EHD guidelines, and the EHD Local Agency Management Program, as well as proper routine maintenance of OWTS, would reduce this impact to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact HAZ-2:

MM HAZ-2(a): *The Permittee shall ensure employees are provided with toilet facilities which are clean and sanitary and shall ensure septage from portable toilets is disposed of in accordance with California Health and Safety Code sections 117400-117450. Sanitary facilities, consisting of an adequate number of onsite toilets and hand washing facilities (with potable water from an approved source) shall be available to employees. The Permittee shall ensure that septage from portable toilets is removed by a Ventura County Environmental Health Division (EHD)-permitted pumper truck and disposed of properly at an approved septage disposal site. The Permittee shall maintain copies of the portable toilet service provider contract and septage disposal receipts for review by the County upon request.*

MM HAZ-2(b): *Prior to installation of a security trailer, the Permittee shall demonstrate the feasibility for the installation of the proposed onsite wastewater treatment system (OWTS) and shall demonstrate compliance with state and local regulations related to the design and installation of the OWTS. Only domestic waste as defined in the Ventura County General Plan and the Ventura County Building Code Ordinance shall be allowed to be discharged into the on-site sewage disposal system.*

The Permittee shall submit a soils/geotechnical report and OWTS system design satisfactory to the Ventura County Environmental Health Division, Liquid Waste Program (EHD) and shall obtain approval from the EHD to install an OWTS on the property prior to installation. The soils/geotechnical report, OWTS design, and OWTS application shall be submitted to the EHD for review and approval prior to the County's issuance of a building permit pertaining to the Project. OWTS design approval and permit to construct the septic systems shall be obtained from EHD.

Prior to approval, EHD staff shall review and verify all relevant documentation, including but not limited to: the soils/geotechnical report(s), system design calculations, building codes, and historic geological data for the area. Once the OWTS design has been evaluated to the satisfaction of EHD, the OWTS plans will be approved and EHD may issue a permit to construct, conduct site inspections, and give final approval of the OWTS.

Once the OWTS has been installed by the Permittee and verified finalized by EHD, the Permittee shall properly maintain the system to prevent OWTS failure or an unauthorized sewage release, and to avoid creating a public nuisance, health concern, or impact the environment. The septic tank shall be serviced, as needed, by a septic pumper truck registered and permitted by Ventura County EHD, and all pumping activities shall be reported to EHD. All septage wastes must be disposed of in an approved manner. EHD staff will receive and respond to any complaints related to OWTS and/or unauthorized sewage releases, and take appropriate enforcement actions as may be needed to ensure the system is properly maintained

Impact HAZ-3: The Project could create public health risk associated with potential release of contaminants that could be contained in recycle asphalt and concrete and fill material imported to the site. (ISAG 29d) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The Project would install and operate concrete and asphalt recycling facility that would receive, process, and export processed recycled material. The Project also includes importing fill for

reclamation activities. According to the application, fill will consist of "soil, mud, rocks, and minor amounts of organic material, but not construction debris." (Sespe, a; pg. 4) The receipt and placement of this material (either temporary placement as with recycle materials or permanent placement as with fill material) would create the potential to introduce contaminants to the site depending on the character of the materials received, and storage, handling, and processing procedures. The County anticipates that compliance with federal, state, and local solid waste regulations regarding the receipt and placement of this material onsite would reduce potential impacts associated with to a level considered less than significant. However, in the absence of a defined process for determining the characteristics of imported material, site-specific acceptance criteria to establish the suitability of imported materials, and protocol for handling and placement of material onsite, this impact is considered potentially significant.

Mitigation measure HAZ-3 requires the Applicant to develop specific protocol for receiving, characterizing, handling, and placement of imported recycle concrete and asphalt and imported fill material, and to provide evidence of all regulatory approvals, monitoring, and reporting associated with the receipt of this imported material. Implementation of MM HAZ-3 would reduce this potential impact to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact HAZ-3

MM HAZ-3: *Prior to the receipt of any imported material to the site, the Permittee shall coordinate with and obtain written approval from the Ventura County Environmental Health Division, Local Enforcement Agency (LEA) to receive imported material. Such approvals may be limited in scope (e.g., address only imported backfill material), in which case the Permittee shall be prohibited from importing other material not expressly authorized by LEA. Notwithstanding LEA approval, the Permittee shall also obtain all other required federal, state, and local approvals, and shall comply with all regulations and conditions of approval, applicable to the receipt, processing, and placement of any and all types of backfill and recycle material to be imported to the site. At a minimum, the Permittee with oversight by the LEA shall ensure that:*

a) prior to being transported to the site, material to be imported has been characterized through sampling and testing or otherwise determined to be suitable for receipt of the site;

b) documentation is prepared for all imported material which includes the results of sampling and testing and provides evidence that the material is suitable for receipt at the site for its intended use (i.e., recycling or fill placement);

c) acceptance criteria are established and permitted through coordination with the Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) and a process of monitoring and recording compliance with the acceptance criteria is developed and implemented; and

d) all recycle asphalt and concrete received is manage and stored in a designated location suitable to avoid stormwater exposure and runoff in a manner that could result in contaminant discharges in stormwater runoff.

Impact HAZ-4: The Project could result in public health impacts related to breeding and/or harborage of vectors of disease, such as mosquitoes, due to standing water onsite. (ISAG 23) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The Project could result in public health impacts related to breeding and/or harborage of vectors of disease, such as mosquitoes, due to standing water onsite. Proper control measures and management of standing water onsite would reduce the potential impact to less than significant.

The Project includes the use of onsite stormwater retention basins that would periodically contain surface water captured during storm events. Other areas of the site could also periodically contain standing water in other undrained areas of the site. If not properly designed and managed, and depending on the duration of water retention and other factors (e.g., temperature, presence of vegetation), areas of surface water within the Project site could result in conditions suitable for mosquito development. Mosquitoes can carry an array of diseases, including West Nile virus and encephalitis. Although there is a potential for standing water to be present under existing conditions, the proposed mine area expansion and proposed reclaimed conditions could increase the potential for standing water and associated potential for mosquito breeding habitat. The potential for the Project to increase mosquito breeding habitat and associated potential for the transmission of mosquito-borne disease is considered a potentially significant impact to public safety. Mitigation measure HAZ-4 requires development and implementation of mosquito control plan that includes measures to ensure that any permanent or temporary surface water containment on the site is managed to avoid or minimize the potential for mosquito propagation.

Mitigation for Impact HAZ-4

MM HAZ-4: *The Permittee shall prepare and implement a mosquito control plan throughout the duration of Project mining operations and until site reclamation is deemed complete. The plan shall be submitted for review and approval by the County and documentation verifying implementation of control plan measures shall be submitted annually to the County. The mosquito control plan shall include the following provisions:*

a) access to the Project site shall be provided for mosquito abatement personnel for surveillance and control of mosquitoes;

b) stormwater retention basins and any other surface water impoundments, including water storage tanks if not fully enclosed, shall be designed and managed to minimize periods of standing water and to minimize growth of vegetation that could contribute to mosquito reproduction;

c) equipment and vehicles shall be stored in a manner so as to minimize the collection of pooled water (such as that which could collect in unmounted tires) and/or pooled water shall be drained within 24 hours following a rain event; and

d) reclaimed surfaces shall be graded to avoid collection of surface water.

Impact HAZ-5: The Project could pose a public safety risk associated with unauthorized public access to mine and processing areas. (ISAG 23) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The Project proposes to expand the existing mining area. Under existing conditions, fencing and warning signage is installed around the perimeter of mined areas and a locked gate at the entrance from Howard Road discourages unauthorized access. The application specifies that the locked gate at the entrance would remain under the Project and the Project would include installation of a 24-hour security trailer. Although the Project site is private property and public access is restricted, the potential for inadvertent or intentional unauthorized access onto the site creates a potential safety risk. In particular, the expanded mining area would result in a larger mine area perimeter above excavated areas and nearer to open space areas with recreational access and public trails. Unauthorized entrance to the site in areas above excavated slopes would create the potential for injury from falls or from falling material. The potential for unauthorized public access and injury is considered potentially significant. Mitigation measure MM HAZ-5 requires the installation and maintenance of security fencing and warning signage around the perimeter of the expanded site and requires that such fencing and signage

be provided in perpetuity. MM HAZ-5 is considered sufficient to reduce Impact HAZ-5 to less than significant. (As noted in the measure, such fencing must be designed to be compatible with wildlife movement. Potential impacts associated with biological resources, including wildlife movement corridors, are addressed in Section 3.5, "Biological Resources.")

Mitigation for Impact HAZ-5

MM HAZ-5: *Prior to mining with the Project expansion areas, the Permittee shall prepare and submit a signage and fencing plan to the County for review and approval. Hazard/Warning signage and fencing shall be installed around the perimeter of previously mined and active mine areas consistent with the County-approved plan. Signage shall be of sufficient size and placement to reasonably notify the public of trespass prohibitions and of hazardous conditions and fencing shall be sufficient to reasonably restrict unauthorized access. All fencing shall be designed in compliance with County zoning code requirements applicable within Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors. Prior to final reclamation and site closure, the Permittee shall create a mechanism to provide funding and to ensure perpetual maintenance of perimeter fencing and signage.*

Impact HAZ-6: The Project would create the potential for increased risk to public safety associated with the transport, handling, storage, and use of blasting agents. (ISAG 23) (Less than Significant)

The Project would require the continued use of blasting to extract materials of appropriate size for processing. Blasting operations involve drilling a borehole into the excavation face, placing charges, and detonating charges. The blasting design, including drill hole patterns, drill hole diameter, and amount and type of explosive, vary according to the competency of the rock types encountered. Under existing operations, blasting is limited to the hours of 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday through Saturday, and the hours and days blasting would be permitted under the Project would not change. The transportation, storage, handling, and use of explosives would continue to be performed or supervised by a licensed explosives expert. The Operator and its contractors are, and would continue to be, required to comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations associated with the transportation, storage, use, and detonation of blasting materials.

Blasting associated with quarry excavation creates a potential safety risk due to the transport, handling, and use of explosives. Under the Project, blasting within the proposed mine expansion areas would occur in areas nearer to public open space and residential areas to the south, east, and north of the site. Safeguards would continue to be implemented in compliance with federal, state, and local regulations. Compliance with applicable regulations and oversight provided by a licensed explosives expert would substantially reduce the potential safety risk. These factors would ensure that a significant threat to public or worker safety would not occur as a result of the continued use of explosives in proposed mine expansion areas. As such, this impact is considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation for Impact HAZ-6

No mitigation is required.

Impact HAZ-7: The Project would involve activities that create potential sources of fire ignition and could increase the potential for wildland fires. (ISAG 18; CEQA Hazards g; CEQA Wildfires a-d) (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

As discussed above, the Project site is located in areas designated as "Moderate" and "Very High" fire hazard severity. Wildland fires have occurred in the Project vicinity and have resulted in significant damage and risk of life and property. Potential fire ignition sources at the Project site under existing conditions include internal combustion engines, blasting, electrical equipment and connections, light and heat sources, improper disposal of cigarettes, and other activities with the potential to generate heat, flame, or sparks from equipment maintenance (e.g., welding) and other activities. Ignition of structures and/or vegetation within the site could spread rapidly to other areas. The proposed expansion of mining and additional activities at the site, including the proposed recycling facility, receipt and placement of fill material, and increased operational periods associated with proposed increases in production would result in marginal increases in the potential for fire ignition. Potential impacts associated with wildland fire include damage to vegetation and habitat, damage to structures and personal property, potential injury and loss of life, air pollution, and increased erosion and landslide potential in burned areas and the associated water quality, damage, and safety risks. It would be speculative to attempt to predict specific effects that would occur due to fire ignition on the Project site. However, sufficient information is known and presented here with regard to potential effects to conclude that the risk of fire ignition sources associated with the Project is potentially significant.

As discussed above, the Ventura County Fire Department oversees a Wildland Fire Action Plan which includes a Fire Hazard Reduction Program (FHRP) that provides specifications for property owners to maintain property free of fire hazards and nuisance vegetation. The Ventura County Fire Code contains the specific requirements of the FHRP as well as other requirements pertaining to fire prevention.

Mitigation measure MM HAZ-7 requires the Applicant to coordinate with the Ventura County Fire Department and development and implement appropriate site management and maintenance plans. Compliance with applicable zoning, building, and fire codes and implementation of MM HAZ-7 would reduce the potential for fire ignition and wildland fire impacts associated with the Project to less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact HAZ-7

MM HAZ-7:

a) Prior to expanded operations under the Project, the Permittee shall coordinate with the Ventura County Fire Department to develop a fire safety plan for the Project site. The fire safety plan shall describe fire prevention measures including access and defensible space clearing requirements; potential fire scenarios; and action plans for each potential scenario which include notification, suppression, and evacuation measures, in the event of a fire within the Project site or within adjacent areas. The Permittee shall comply with all applicable elements of the fire safety plan throughout the period of site operations.

b) Prior to expanded operations under the Project, the Permittee shall install and maintain emergency water distribution systems and/or other suitable fire suppression systems on the Project site in compliance with State and County fire code.

c) The Permittee shall provide for emergency fire suppression access to the Project site, including access to areas of open space around the perimeter of the mine expansion area.

Impact HAZ-8: The Project could increase the demand for police, fire protection, and other emergency services. (ISAG 32, 33a, and 33b) (Less than Significant)

Impacts associated with public safety and fire risk discussed above could create the potential for the Project to result in an increased demand for police, fire protection, or other emergency services. Although the Project would expand and increase operations as compared to existing conditions, the Project is not expected to do so in a manner that would cause the demand for police, fire protection, or other emergency services to exceed existing service capacities. Thus, it is also not anticipated that the Project would cause or contribute to the need for construction of new facilities to provide such services. Therefore, the potential impact associated with potential increased demand for police, fire protection, and other emergency services is considered less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact HAZ-8

No mitigation is required.

3.11.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

Impacts associated with the hazards and public safety topics addressed in this section are generally Project-specific and are assessed on a site-specific basis. The cumulative projects discussed in Section 3.1.5 would have the potential for their own project-specific impacts associated with hazards and public safety, but such potential impacts would not create the potential for combining with the Project impacts discussed in Section 3.11.2.2, above. Therefore, the Project would not incrementally contribute to cumulatively considerable hazards or public safety-related impacts and no additional mitigation is required for cumulative impacts.

3.11.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies, including policies associated with hazards and public safety, is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

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SECTION 3.12 – ENERGY

SECTION 3.12–ENERGY

This section provides an evaluation of potential impacts of the Project associated with energy consumption. Fuel and electricity use information associated with the existing operation is based in part of information submitted by the Applicant in an April 1, 2019, letter regarding "Response to Pacific Rock Quarry: LU10-0003 Updated Status of Outstanding Invoices and Environmental Impact Report Information Delays dated March 12, 2019, Pacific Rock Quarry Expansion" (Sespe, 2019d) included as Appendix H of this EIR.

3.12.1 Setting

3.12.1.1 Energy Consumption under Existing Operations

Primary components of energy consumption associated with existing mining and processing operations at the site consist of diesel fuel use and electricity. Diesel fuel is delivered periodically to the site for use in vehicles and equipment. Electricity is supplied to the site by Southern California Edison Company on existing electrical transmission and distribution systems. Diesel fuel and electricity use at the site under existing conditions are discussed below.

Baseline Diesel Fuel Consumption

Under existing operations, diesel fuel is used for powering certain equipment and vehicles operated on the site. The equipment includes, but may not be limited to:

- drill rig;
- excavator (John Deere 870 Ex);
- dozer (John Deere 1050 K);
- loader (John Deere 844 K);
- haul Truck (John Deere 410 E); and
- portable mobile screening plant (Extec S5 and PowerScreen 800-PS).

Tabulated data from diesel fuel invoices for 2016 was submitted to the County by the Applicant (Sespe, 2019d; pp. 3, 4) and is summarized in Table 3.12-1, "2016 Operations Diesel Fuel Use." Based on this data, total diesel fuel use in 2016 was 71,228 gallons resulting in a monthly average diesel fuel use of 5,936 gallons and a daily average usage of 228 gallons when averaged over the permitted 312 annual operational days. A comparison of 2016 diesel fuel use with the reported 2016 annual production of 24,742 tons of aggregate suggests an average usage rate of 2.88 gallons of diesel fuel use per ton of aggregate produced. It should be noted that since the fuel use date provided is for diesel fuel deliveries to the site, additional fuel use associated with non-diesel-powered onsite equipment and vehicles as well as fuel consumption associated with vehicles and equipment associated with existing operations that were not fueled onsite (e.g., worker vehicles, offsite haul trucks, etc.) are not included in the data. Further, since data has been made available only for year 2016, a correlation and comparison to total fuel use and fuel use per ton of aggregate produced in other years cannot be made based on information currently available to the County.

Table 3.12-1. 2016 Operations Diesel Fuel Use

Month	Diesel Fuel Use (gallons)[1]
January	4,192.0
February	4,198.9

Month	Diesel Fuel Use (gallons)[1]
March	7,425.5
April	14,229.0
May	3,901.3
June	7,242.2
July	7,033.6
August	4,087.2
September	6,917.5
October	4,661.1
November	3,035.1
December	4,304.6
Total Diesel Fuel	**71,228**
Average Monthly Diesel Fuel	*5,936*
Average Daily (assuming 312 operational days)	*228*
Amount of Aggregate Produced in 2016 (tons)[2]	24,742
Gallons of Diesel per Ton of Aggregate	**2.88 gallons per ton**

Source: Fuel use based on Sespe, 2019d.

Notes:

1. Based on listing of 20 fuel invoices for period January 13, 2016 – December 7, 2016.
2. As reported in the operator's 2016 Mining Operation Annual Report.

As discussed in Section 3.1.3, the existing conditions baseline annual aggregate production used for this EIR is 20,900 tons and is based on the 10-year average of reported annual production for the period 2008 through 2017. Applying the average diesel use per ton of aggregate produced of 2.88 gallons to the 2008 – 2017 production data results in a baseline annual diesel fuel consumption of 60,192 gallons of diesel fuel per year. Table 3.12-1, "Baseline Diesel Fuel Use," presents the estimated annual and 10-year average (i.e., baseline) diesel fuel use associated with onsite mining and processing operations.

Table 3.12-2. Baseline Diesel Fuel Use

Year	Reported Production (tons)	Estimated Diesel Fuel Use (gallons)[1]
2008	12,281	35,369
2009	7,854	22,619
2010	16,632	47,900
2011	31,127	89,645
2012	36,740	105,811
2013	17,607	50,708
2014	3,329	9,587
2015	29,862	86,002
2016	24,742	71,256
2017	28,933	83,327
Annual Average/Baseline	**20,900**	**60,192**

Notes:

1. Assumes 2.88 gallons per ton based on 2016 production and fuel use data from Table 3.12-1).

Baseline Electricity Consumption

Under existing operations, electrical service is provided to the site by Southern California Edison Company (Sespe, 2019d) and electricity is used for:

- screening and crushing plant,
- simplicity rip rap sorter,
- conveyors,
- water supply pumping,
- scale house and scale operations,
- site security lighting, and
- other ancillary uses.

Tabulated data of electricity use for the period January 4, 2018, to February 4, 2019, (excluding March 7 through April 4, 2018) was submitted by the Applicant and is summarized in Table 3.12-3, "Jan. 2018 – Feb. 2019 Operations Electricity Use." Based on this data, total electricity use for the reported period was 8,509 kilowatt hours (kWh), resulting in a monthly average electricity use of 709 kWh and a daily average of 27.27 kWh when averaged over the permitted 312 annual operational days. A comparison of 2018 electricity use with the reported 2018 annual production of 31,661 tons of aggregate suggests a usage rate of 0.25 kWh of electricity use per ton of aggregate produced. It should be noted that since electricity use data has been made available only for year 2018, a correlation and comparison to total electricity use and electricity use per ton of aggregate produced in other years cannot be made based on information currently available to the County.

Table 3.12-3. Jan. 2018 – Feb. 2019 Operations Electricity Use

Period	Electricity Use (kWh)
1/4/2018 to 2/4/2018	762
2/2/2018 to 3/6/2018	913
3/7/2018 to 4/4/2018	--[1]
4/5/2018 to 5/4/2018	875
5/4/2018 to 6/5/2018	691
6/5/2018 to 7/5/2018	694
7/5/2018 to 8/3/2018	688
8/3/2018 to 9/4/2018	651
9/4/2018 to 10/3/2018	547
10/3/2018 to 11/1/2018	583
11/1/2018 to 12/4/2018	745
12/4/2018 to 1/4/2019	866
Total Electricity for Period	**8,015**
Average Monthly Electricity Use for Period	*668*
Average Daily (assuming 312 operational days)	*25.7*
Amount of Aggregate Produced in 2018 (tons)[2]	31,661
kWh per Ton of Aggregate	**0.25 kWh per ton**

Source: Electricity use based on Sespe, 2019d.

1. Period not reported in Sespe, 2019d.
2. As reported in the operator's 2018 Mining Operation Annual Report.

As discussed in Section 3.1, the existing conditions baseline production used for this EIR is 20,900 tons and is based on the 10-year average of reported annual production for the period 2008 through 2017. Applying the average electricity use per ton of aggregate produced of 0.25 kWh to the average 2008 – 2017 production data results in a baseline annual electricity consumption of 5,225 kWh per year. Table 3.12-4, "Baseline Electricity Use," presents the estimated annual and 10-year average (i.e., baseline) electricity use associated with onsite mining and processing operations.

Table 3.12- 4. Baseline Electricity Use

Year	Reported Production (tons)	Estimated Electricity Use (kWh)[1]
2008	12,281	3,070
2009	7,854	1,964
2010	16,632	4,158
2011	31,127	7,782
2012	36,740	9,185
2013	17,607	4,402
2014	3,329	832
2015	29,862	7,466
2016	24,742	6,186
2017	28,933	7,233
Annual Average/Baseline	**20,900**	**5,225**

Notes:
1. Assumes .025 kWh per ton based on 2018 production and electricity use data from Table 3.12-3.

Existing Energy Conservation Measures

Information regarding energy use management or conservation measures associated with the existing operation has not been made available for this evaluation. Although it is anticipated that operations under existing conditions seek to limit inefficient energy consumption to minimize fuel and electricity costs, specific measures that may be employed at the existing operation are unknown.

3.12.1.2 Regulatory Framework

California Environmental Quality Act

CEQA requires an environmental impact report to include a discussion of mitigation measures to minimize significant effects on the environment relating to "wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy." (PRC Section 21100(b)(3)). Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines provides guidance for analyzing energy impacts in an EIR, but neither Appendix F itself, nor any authority, requires that an EIR discuss every possible energy impact or conservation measure listed in Appendix F. Energy impacts need only be discussed "to the extent relevant and applicable to the project." (CEQA Guidelines Appendix F Section II.)

CEQA Guidelines Appendix F states, "the goal of conserving energy implies the wise and efficient use of energy. The means of achieving this goal include: (1) decreasing overall per capita energy consumption, (2) decreasing reliance on fossil fuels such as coal, natural gas and oil, and (3) increasing reliance on renewable energy sources." (CEQA Guidelines Appendix F Section I.) In addition, factors suggested in Appendix F for determining and mitigating potentially significant energy impacts may be relevant to this Project's fuel usage and energy consumption.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 (as amended in December 2018) specifies:

> (b) Energy Impacts. If analysis of the project's energy use reveals that the project may result in significant environmental effects due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption use of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources, the EIR shall mitigate that energy use. This analysis should include the project's energy use for all project phases and components, including transportation-related energy, during construction and operation. In addition to building code compliance, other relevant considerations may include, among others, the project's size, location, orientation, equipment use and any renewable energy features that could be incorporated into the project. (Guidance on information that may be included in such an analysis is presented in Appendix F.) This analysis is subject to the rule of reason and shall focus on energy use that is caused by the project. This analysis may be included in related analyses of air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, transportation or utilities in the discretion of the lead agency.

Further, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.4 (as amended in December 2018) specifies:

> (1) An EIR shall describe feasible measures which could minimize significant adverse impacts, including where relevant, inefficient and unnecessary consumption of energy.
>
> > (C) Energy conservation measures, as well as other appropriate mitigation measures, shall be discussed when relevant. Examples of energy conservation measures are provided in Appendix F.

Ventura County General Plan

Goal COS-8 of the Conservation and Open Space Element of the "Ventura County 2040 General Plan" (Ventura County, 2020) is, "To minimize energy consumption and increase the use of renewable energy." General Plan policies associated with energy consumption and efficiency potentially applicable to the Project are identified in Section 3.13 of this EIR.

3.12.2 Impact Analysis

3.12.2.1 Significance Thresholds

This section provides an overview of the impact criteria and significance thresholds used to evaluation Project impacts associated with energy consumption and conservation in consideration of the Ventura County ISAG (2011) and Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

Ventura County ISAG

The Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) does not identify specific energy consumption or conservation issues pertinent to the evaluation in this section. (ISAG item 30, "Utilities," is addressed in Section 3.14 of this EIR.)

CEQA

This impact assessment considers the evaluation criteria identified in the Energy checklist in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. These criteria address whether a project would:

a) result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; or

b) conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

The Project would not obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency; thus, CEQA item "b" has been eliminated from further consideration.

3.12.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact EN-1: The Project would result in increased use of diesel fuel and electricity. (CEQA a) (Less than Significant)

Under the Project, ongoing mining, processing, haul truck loading, and related activities would continue to use fuel and electricity. The Project would permit annual aggregate production of up to 486,000 tons per year as compared to the baseline production of 20,900 tons per year. The Project would also permit receipt and recycling of up to 30,000 cubic yards per year of asphalt and concrete for recycling, receive up to 100,000 cubic yards of imported material for fill associated with reclamation, and install a 24-hour security trailer with lighting and other electricity uses. The Project would also increase water use from approximately 27.9 AFY to 83.5 AFY, which would require increased electricity for pumping from the proposed water supply sources (i.e., an adjacent offsite pond currently used and an onsite well proposed as a source of potable water). These increased and new components of operations under the Project would increase daily and annual energy consumption as compared to baseline conditions. However, any increase in electricity, fuel, or other energy consumption associated with the Project is reasonable anticipated to be proportional on a per ton basis.

Under the Project, additional offsite vehicle trips and associated diesel and gasoline consumption would also occur as compared to baseline conditions. Increased trips would be associated with the increase in annual aggregate production, the import and export of recycle asphalt and concrete, imported fill material for reclamation, and worker and delivery trips. This EIR addresses the increase in offsite trips associated with the Project in terms of environmental impacts associated with noise, air quality, greenhouse gases, and transportation. The Applicant has little or no control over the fuel consumption and conservation aspects of offsite vehicle operation, no aspects of the Project indicate that it would be reasonably foreseeable for the energy efficiency (i.e., fuel use) associated with transport of material would be less efficient on a per ton of material basis than under existing/baseline conditions.

No aspects of the Project operations are identified that indicate the Project would result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources. Therefore, this impact is considered less than significant, and no mitigation is required.

Mitigation for Impact EN-1

No mitigation required.

3.12.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

Energy consumption associated with the Project is a project-specific impact that would not contribute to inefficient or wasteful use of energy associated with other projects and would not preclude other projects from implementing energy conservation measures. Therefore, the Project would not create the potential for substantial cumulative effects associated with energy.

3.12.2.4 General Plan Policy Consistency

An evaluation of the Project's consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies is provided in Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning."

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SECTION 3.13 – LAND USE AND PLANNING

SECTION 3.13–LAND USE AND PLANNING

This section provides an evaluation of potential impacts of the Project associated with land use and planning. Issues addressed include potential conflicts with adjacent land uses, potential effects on community character, potential effects associated with recreation facilities, and consistency with the Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020).

3.13.1 Setting

3.13.1.1 Project Site and Adjacent Land Uses

The Pacific Rock Quarry is located approximately 1.5 miles east of Lewis Road and approximately two miles south of State Highway 101 off a private road (Howard Road) in unincorporated Ventura County. The existing quarry is located within Assessor's Parcel Number ("APN") 234-0-060-220, and proposed expansion areas are within additional portions of APN 234-0-060-220 and a portion of APN 234-0-060-190.

Table 3.13-1, "Project Site Parcels and Designations," summarizes the areas and Ventura County General Plan Land Use Diagram land use designations and zoning designations of parcels within with the Project site is located. Figure 3.13-1, "Project Site Land Use Designations," and Figure 3.13-2, "Project Site Zoning Designations," illustrate the land use and zoning designations of the Project site parcels, respectively.

Table 3.13-1. Project Site Parcels and Designations

Assessor's Parcel Number *(APN)*	Area *(acres)*	General Plan Land Use Designation	Zoning Designation
234-0-060-220	241.34	Agricultural Open Space	Agricultural Exclusive (AE)-40 ac/HCWC
234-0-060-190	476.57	Open Space	Open Space (OS)-160 ac/HCWC

Notes:

1. HCWC component of zoning designation reflects Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridor overlay zoning pursuant to County amendments to zoning ordinance in March 2019.

As shown in Table 3.13-1, the Project parcels are a combination of General Plan land use designations of "Agricultural" and "Open Space." Zoning designations are Agricultural Exclusive and Open Space and subject to Habitat Connectivity Wildlife Corridor (HCWC) overlay zoning. (Additional discussion of the HCWC zoning and the Project's consistency with the overlay zone is provided in Section 3.5, "Biological Resources," and is not addressed further in this section.)

Under existing conditions, portions of the Project site have been directly disturbed by mining activities and facilities, permitted within an approximately 62.5-acre centrally located area of the site. Processing equipment, aggregate stockpiles, a truck scale and scale house, and equipment storage areas are located within the existing mine disturbance area. Other areas of the proposed CUP and mine expansion area but outside of the existing mine disturbance area include open space areas to the north, east, and south of the existing mine area and an approximately 11-acre agricultural area in the southwestern portion of the existing CUP area. The agricultural area of the site includes 4.1-acres of Prime Farmland and 6.7-acres of Unique Farmland, as discussed further in Section 3.3.

Offsite land uses within the Project area include open space to the northeast, east, south, and southwest and passive recreation opportunities including trails within these open space areas; utility corridors

including a high-voltage transmission line running generally east-west to the south of the Project site, agricultural farmlands to the northwest of the site, the Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery to the west of the site, rural residences within the agricultural areas to the west and northwest, and suburban residences within the Dos Vientos community to the south and southeast.

3.12.1.2 Regulatory Framework

Ventura County General Plan

California law requires that every county and city adopt a general plan "for the physical development of the county or city, and of any land outside its boundaries which in the planning agency's judgment bears relation to its planning." (Gov. Code, § 65300.) A general plan serves as the jurisdiction's "constitution" or "blueprint" for future decisions concerning a variety of issues including land use, health and safety, and resource conservation. All area plans, specific plans, subdivisions, public works projects, and zoning decisions must be consistent with the direction provided in the County's General Plan. Ventura County adopted an amended General Plan in September 2020. The "Ventura County 2040 General Plan" is a long-range plan that guides decision-making, establishes rules and standards for development and county improvements, and helps to inform residents, developers, and decisionmakers. It reflects the County's vision for the future, provides direction through the year 2040 on growth and development, and is an expression of the quality of life in Ventura County. (Ventura County, 2020)

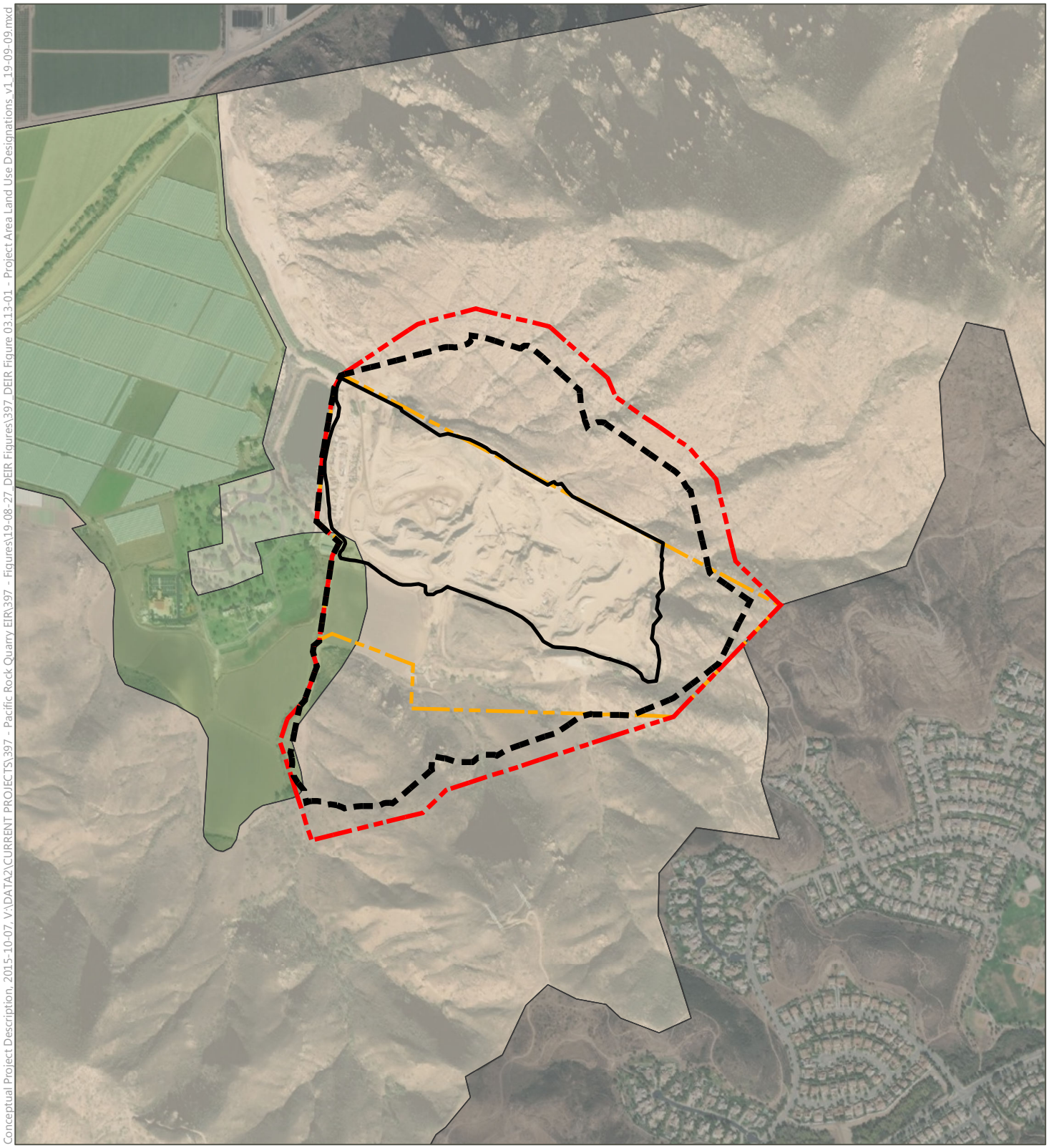
The Ventura County General Plan contains definitions of varies land use designations, goals and policies associated with land use designations, as well as goals, policies, and programs associated with various other resources, hazards, and public facilities and services.

Land Use Designations

Two Ventura County General Plan land use designations are applicable within the Project site – Agricultural (AG) and Open Space (OS).

The Agricultural designation is applied to lands which are suitable for the cultivation of crops and the raising of livestock. Because of the inherent importance of agriculture as a land use in and of itself, agriculture is not subsumed under the Open Space land use designation, but has been assigned a separate land use designation. As specified in the General Plan, under the Agricultural designation, the County shall:

- Identify, preserve, and protect agricultural lands as a non-renewable resource within the county that are critical to the maintenance of the local agricultural economy and are important to the state and nation for the production of food, fiber, and ornamentals.
- Maintain agricultural lands in parcel sizes which will assure that viable farming units are retained.
- Establish policies and regulations which restrict agricultural land to farming and related uses rather than other development purposes.
- Restrict the introduction of conflicting uses into farming areas.



SOURCES: General Plan Land Use Designations–County of Ventura Land Use RMA data download, accessed Sept. 2019; Aerial–DigitalGlobe (11-14-2018); compiled by Benchmark Resources in 2020

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

Project Site Land Use Designations
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.13-1

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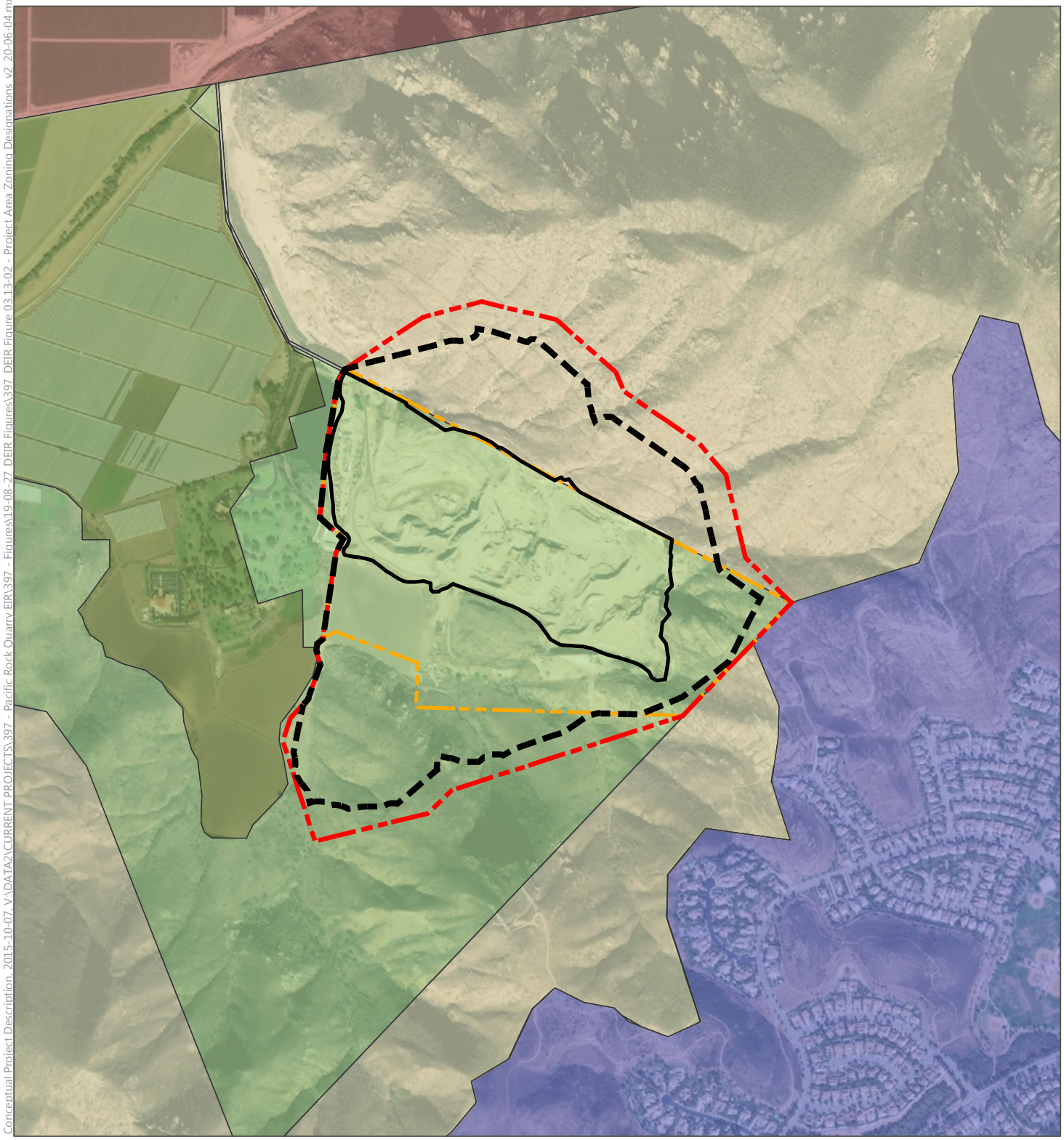

SOURCES: Zoning Designations–County of Ventura Land Use RMA data download, accessed Sept. of 2019; Aerial–DigitalGlobe (11-14-2018); compiled by Benchmark Resources in 2020

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

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0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

Project Site Zoning Designations
PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT
Figure 3.13-2

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The Open Space designation encompasses land, as defined under Section 65560 of the Government Code, as any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use as defined in this section and which is designated on a local, regional or State open space plan as any of the following:

- Open space for the preservation of natural resources including, but not limited to, areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, including habitat for fish and wildlife species; areas required for ecologic and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, bays and estuaries; and coastal beaches, lakeshores, banks of rivers and streams, and watershed lands.
- Open space used for the managed production of resources, including but not limited to, forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands not designated agricultural; areas required for recharge of groundwater basins; bays, estuaries, marshes, rivers and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply.
- Open space for outdoor recreation, including but not limited to, areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors.
- Open space for public health and safety, including, but not limited to, areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality.
- Open space to promote the formation and continuation of cohesive communities by defining the boundaries and by helping to prevent urban sprawl.
- Open space to promote efficient municipal services and facilities by confining urban development to defined development areas.

Agricultural and Open Space Land Use Direction

General Plan Goal LU-8 expresses the County's Agricultural land use policy direction as follows.

LU-8. To maintain and Agricultural designation that:

- Recognizes the farmlands within the county that are critical to the maintenance of the local agricultural economy and which are important to the state and nation for the production of food, fiber, and ornamentals;
- Preserves and protects agricultural lands as a nonrenewable resource to assure their continued availability for the production of food, fiber, and ornamentals;
- Promotes the economic viability of agricultural lands by assisting agricultural producers and establishing zoning policies that support long-term investments in agriculture;
- Maintains agricultural lands in parcel sizes which will assure that viable farming units are retained;
- Establishes policies and regulations which encourage agricultural land to remain in farming and related uses;
- Restricts the introduction of conflicting uses into farming areas; and

- Subject to state law, the Guidelines for Orderly Development, and applicable zoning requirements, actively promotes infrastructure, sized not larger than necessary for the specific project, for farmworker housing to support the continuing viability of agriculture.

Land use policies identified in the General Plan to achieve Goal LU-8 are:

LU-8.1 Areas Appropriate for the Agricultural Land Use Designation. The County shall ensure that the Agricultural land use designation primarily includes lands that are designated as Prime Farmlands, Farmlands of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmlands in the state's Important Farmland Inventory (IFI), although the County may not designate land as Agricultural if small areas of agricultural land are isolated from larger blocks of farming land. In such cases, the Agricultural land is to be assigned to the Open Space or Rural designation for consistency with surrounding properties. (MPSP)

LU-8.2 Land Uses Appropriate for the Agricultural Land Use Designation. The County shall ensure that land designated as Agricultural is used for the production of food, fiber, and ornamentals; animal husbandry and care; uses accessory to agriculture; and limited temporary or public uses which are consistent with agricultural or agriculturally related uses. (RDR)

LU-8.3 Minimal Parcel Size for the Agricultural Land Use Designation. The County shall ensure that the smallest minimum parcel size consistent with the Agricultural land use designation is 40 acres. The County may require larger minimum parcel sizes based on the zone classification. (RDR, MPSP)

LU-8.4 Maximum Lot Coverage Nonconforming Lots—Agricultural Land Use Designation. The County shall ensure that the maximum lot coverage of lots of less than 10 acres (nonconforming) in area shall be as specified for the Agricultural designation, or 2,500 square feet plus 1 square foot for each 22.334 square feet of lot area over 5,000 square feet, whichever is greater. Greater lot coverage may be allowed under discretionary permits for Farmworker Housing Complexes and existing uses/structures listed in the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance under the heading of "Crop and Orchard Production". (RDR)

LU-8.5 Farmworker Housing. The County shall support the development of safe and quality farmworker housing that facilitates a reliable labor force and promotes efficient agricultural operations. Housing units shall include a variety of housing types, including group quarters and larger dwelling units that can accommodate a family. (RDR)

General Plan Goal LU-9 expresses the County's Open Space land use policy direction as follows.

LU-9. To maintain an Open Space designation that:

- Preserves for the benefit of all county residents the continued wise use of the county's renewable and nonrenewable resources by limiting the encroachment into such areas of uses which would unduly and prematurely hamper or preclude the use or appreciation of such resources;
- Acknowledges the presence of certain hazardous features which urban development should avoid for public health and safety reasons, as well as for the possible loss of public improvements in these areas and the attendant financial costs to the public;
- Retains open space lands in a non-urbanized state so as to preserve the maximum number of future land use options;

- Retains open space lands for outdoor recreational activities, parks, trails and for scenic lands;
- Defines urban areas by providing contrasting but complementary areas which should be left non-urbanized;
- Recognizes the intrinsic value of open space lands and not regard such lands as "areas waiting for urbanization";
- Encourages Land Conservation Act (LCA) contracts on farming and grazing and open space lands; and
- Supports the productive agricultural activities of Open Space designated lands that are commonly used for agriculture, grazing, and ranching and that are important to the overall economy of Ventura County.

Land use policies identified in the General Plan to achieve Goal LU-9 are:

> LU-9.1 Areas Appropriate for the Open Space Land Use Designation. The County shall ensure that the Open Space land use designation includes areas of land or water that are set aside for the preservation of natural resources, including, but not limited to, areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, including habitat for fish and wildlife species; areas required for ecologic and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, bays, wetlands, and estuaries; and coastal beaches, lakeshores, banks of rivers and streams, and important watershed lands. (MPSP)
>
> LU-9.2 Preservation of Areas for Public Health and Safety. The County shall designate areas of land or water which are set aside for public health and safety as Open Space, thereby safeguarding humans and property from certain natural hazards, including, but not limited to, areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs, and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality. (MPSP)
>
> LU-9.3 Minimal Parcel Size for the Open Space Land Use Designation. The County shall ensure that the smallest minimum parcel size consistent with the Open Space land use category is 10 acres. The County may require larger minimum parcel sizes based on the zone classification. (RDR, MPSP)
>
> LU-9.4 Minimal Parcel Size for the Open Space Contiguous with Agricultural. The County shall require Open Space properties contiguous with Agricultural designated land to have a minimal parcel size of 20 acres. (RDR, MPSP)
>
> LU-9.5 Recreational Areas Appropriate for the Open Space Land Use Designation. The County shall designate areas appropriate for recreational activities as Open Space, including, but not limited to, use and enjoyment of recreational trails and areas for hunting and fishing. Preservation of open space also serves to protect areas of outstanding scenic, historic, and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreation purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors. (MPSP)
>
> LU-9.6 Undeveloped Areas Appropriate for the Open Space Land Use Designation. The County shall designate undeveloped natural areas as Open Space if they surround urban-designated areas which have been set aside to define the boundaries of the urban-designated areas, to prevent urban

sprawl, and to promote efficient municipal services and facilities by confining the areas of urban development. (MPSP)

LU-9.7 Natural Resource Areas Appropriate for the Open Space Land Use Designation. The County shall designate areas set aside for managed production of resources as Open Space, including, but not limited to, forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands not otherwise designated Agricultural; areas required for the recharge of groundwater basins; bays, estuaries, marshes, rivers, and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply. (MPSP)

LU-9.8 Maximum Lot Coverage Nonconforming Lots – Open Space Land Use Designation. The County shall ensure that the maximum lot coverage of lots of less than 10 acres (nonconforming) in area shall be as specified for the Open Space designation, or 2,500 square feet plus 1 square foot for each 22.334 square feet of lot area over 5,000 square feet, whichever is greater. Greater building coverage may be allowed under discretionary permits for Farmworker Housing Complexes and existing uses/structures listed in the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance under the heading of "Crop and Orchard Production". (RDR)

LU-9.9 Open Space Land Use Designation Interpretations. The County shall ensure that Open Space Interpretations granted prior to May 17, 1983 permitting parcel sizes less than those specified in the General Plan shall be considered conforming to the General Plan. Zoning which is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Open Space Interpretations shall be considered conforming to the General Plan. (RDR)

3.13.2 Impact Analysis

3.13.2.1 Significance Thresholds

This section provides an overview of the impact criteria and significance thresholds used to evaluation Project impacts associated with land use and planning in consideration of the Ventura County ISAG (2011) and Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines.

Ventura County ISAG

The Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) includes the following resource topics relevant for consideration in this land use and planning evaluation.

ISAG 25. Community Character

Pursuant to the ISAG, impact evaluations associated with community character consider the following:

1. A project that is inconsistent with any of the policies or development standards relating to community character of the Ventura County General Plan Goals, Policies and Programs or applicable Area Plan (above), is regarded as having a potentially significant environmental impact; and/or
2. A project has the potential to have a significant impact on community character, if it either individually or cumulatively when combined with recently approved, current, and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects would introduce physical development that is incompatible with existing land uses, architectural form or style, site design/layout, or density/parcel sizes within the community in which the project site is located.

ISAG 30. Recreation Facilities

Pursuant to the ISAG, impact evaluations associated with recreation facilities consider the following:

> A project will have a significant impact on recreation if it would cause an increase in the demand for recreation, parks, and/or trails and corridors or would cause a decrease in recreation, parks, and/or trails or corridors when measured against the following standards. Such standards are multi-jurisdictional in terms of supply and are to be used as a method of measuring whether an impact will be significant to the point of requiring an Environmental Impact Report.
>
> 1. Local Parks/Facilities - 5 acres of developable land (less than 15% slope) per 1000 population.
> 2. Regional Parks/Facilities - 5 acres of developable land per 1000 population.
> 3. Regional Trails/Corridors - 2.5 miles per 1000 population.

A project will also have a significant impact on recreation if it would impede future development of Recreation Parks/Facilities and/or Regional Trails/Corridors.

General Plan Consistency

The ISAG also identifies several polies related to various resource topics indicating the need to evaluate a project for consistency with each policy. However, the ISAG has not yet been updated to reflect goals and policies in the Ventura County 2040 General Plan adopted in September 2020. Therefore, the evaluation in this EIR considers Project consistency with potentially applicable policies contained in the September 2020 General Plan.

CEQA

This impact assessment considers the evaluation criteria identified in the "Land Use and Planning" and "Recreation" checklists in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. These criteria address whether a project would result in the effects listed below.

Land Use and Planning

a) physically divide an established community; or

b) cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Recreation

a) increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated; or

b) include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment.

3.13.2.2 Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Impact LU-1: The Project could conflict with adjacent land uses or adversely affect community character. (ISAG 25; CEQA Land Use and Planning "a") (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

The Project would expand the existing mining operation; increase annual aggregate production rates; increase the permitted operational days from Monday – Saturday to Monday – Sunday (adding Sunday to provide for operations seven days per week); increase operational loadout hours from 7:00 AM – 4:00 PM to 5:30 AM – 10:00 PM; add concrete and asphalt recycling operations, add receive of imported fill material; and install a 24-hour security trailer. These expanded activities would create the potential for conflicts with adjacent land uses. Because the Project site is not located in an established community, it is not considered to have the potential to adversely affect community character. However, potential conflicts with adjacent land uses are considered further in this EIR.

Many of the Project's operational components that would have the potential to conflict with adjacent land uses already occur under existing operations, but would increase in duration and intensity as a result of the Project. Adjacent land uses potentially affected by the Project include the adjacent Conejo Mountain Memorial Cemetery to the west of the site; public trail use and scenic viewing opportunities in open space areas northeast, east, and south of the site; and residential and other community land uses to the south and southeast of the site. Potential conflicts are anticipated to be primarily associated with resource impact issues considered throughout this EIR. These include:

- visual impacts associated with the expansion of mining activities and enlarged area of surface disturbance and visibility of these areas from open space areas and publicly accessible trails, and residences, as evaluated at Impact VIS-1 in Section 3.2 of this EIR;
- lighting effects associated with expanded hours of operations and the potential visibility of lights and effects on night sky, as evaluated at Impact VIS-2 in Section 3.2 of this EIR;
- air quality and health effects associated with increased fugitive dust, criteria pollutants, and toxic air contaminant emissions from expanded mining and processing operations, as evaluated at Impact AQ-1 and AQ-2 in Section 3.4 of this EIR; and
- noise effects associated with expanded mining and processing operations, as evaluated at Impact NV-1 in Section 3.8 of this EIR.

Impacts associated with these issues are fully evaluated in the sections referenced in the bullet list above. This Impact LU-1 recognizes that these effects individually and collectively can contribute to conflicts with adjacent land uses. Impacts associated with air quality are found to be less than significant and no mitigation is required. Impacts associated with visual resources and noise are found to be significant, and mitigation measures are identified in this EIR to minimize these impacts. Although residual impacts would occur associated with these resources, such residual impacts are not considered to represent a substantial or significant land use conflict with adjacent land uses. Therefore, with implementation of mitigation measures identified for Project impacts associated with visual resources, air quality, and noise, the Project's potential impact associated with land use conflicts with adjacent land uses is considered less than significant and no additional mitigation is required.

Mitigation for Impact LU-1:

Implement mitigation measures MM VIS-1, MM VIS-2, MM AQ-1, and NV-1.

Impact LU-2: The Project could adversely affect recreational resources. (ISAG 30; CEQA Recreation "a" and "b") (Less than Significant)

The Project would not directly affect any existing or planned recreational facilities. The Project would not increase the demand for recreational resources or result in the construction or need to construct new recreation facilities. Publicly accessible open space areas are located to the east, and south of the site, including a trail network with various trailheads from the Dos Vientos community. Trails and trailheads in proximity to the Project site are illustrated on Figure 3.13-3, "Trails in Project Vicinity." As discussed in Section 3.2, "Visual Resources," certain locations along the trails and viewing locations accessible from the trails have views toward the Project site and Impact VIS-1 discusses Project impacts to these views. Mitigation measure MM VIS-1 provides measures that would minimize Impact VIS-1 to the extent feasible and would reduce the visual impacts to trail users within this area. Additionally, potential noise and vibration impacts to trail users and open space areas are assessed in this EIR at Impact NV-1 and determined to be less than significant with incorporation of Mitigation Measure MM NV-1. Notwithstanding potential visual impacts to trail and open space users, the Project would not limit or restrict public use of the existing trail network and open space areas. For these reasons, the Project impact associated with recreational resources is considered less than significant.

Mitigation for Impact LU-2:

No mitigation required.

Impact LU-3: Project consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies. (ISAG all resources; CEQA Land Use and Planning "b") (Less than Significant with Mitigation)

This evaluation of Project consistency with the Ventura County General Plan identifies and evaluates potentially applicable policies in the "Ventura County 2040 General Plan Policy Document" (Ventura County, 2020). The consistency evaluation is documented below in Table 3.13-2, "General Plan Policy Consistency Evaluation."

The General Plan policy consistency evaluation concludes that, with implementation of mitigation measures included in this EIR and with potential imposition of additional conditions of approval, the Project would be consistent with applicable policies of the Ventura County 2040 General Plan.

In some instances, mitigation and required additional studies or information would be required for policy consistency. The consistency conclusions in Table 3.13-2 assume implementation of mitigation measures identified in this EIR and may also require additional conditions of approval to be adopted by the County with approval of the requested CUP and reclamation plan amendment. Such additional conditions of approval would be developed by County staff separate from the environmental review process.

Table 3.13-2. General Plan Policy Consistency Evaluation

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
Land Use – Rural, Agricultural, and Open Space Policy Direction	
LU-6.1 Agricultural Buffers The County shall require non-agricultural land uses adjacent to agricultural uses to incorporate adequate buffers (e.g., fences, setbacks) to limit conflicts with adjoining agricultural operations. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project would not adversely affect or conflict with the agricultural use of adjacent lands.
2.7 Development Review and Inter-Agency Coordination	
LU-19.4 Consultation with State and Federal Agencies The County shall continue to consult with applicable state and federal regulatory agencies during project review and permitting activities. (IGC)	Consistent. The County has and will continue to solicit input from state and federal agencies during the County's CEQA review of the Project.
4.1 Roadways	
CTM-1.1 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Standards and CEQA Evaluation The County shall require evaluation of County General Plan land use designation changes, zone changes, and discretionary development for their individual (i.e., project-specific) and cumulative transportation impacts based on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to the methodology and thresholds of significance criteria set forth in the County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.9, "Transportation and Circulation," of this EIR evaluates potential transportation-related impacts of the Project, including evaluation of Project VMT.
CTM-1.2 Projects with Significant Transportation Impacts County General Plan land use designation changes, zone changes, and discretionary development that would cause an individual (i.e., project-specific) or cumulative significant transportation impact based on Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) shall be prohibited unless: 1. There are no feasible mitigation measures available that would reduce the impact to a less than significant level; and 2. The County's decision-making body, after balancing, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of the project against its unavoidable transportation impact and any other environmental risks, determines that the benefits of the project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts and adopt a statement of overriding considerations pursuant CEQA. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.9, "Transportation and Circulation," of this EIR evaluates potential transportation-related impacts of the Project, including evaluation of Project VMT, and concludes that the Project would not have a significant impact associated with VMT.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
CTM-1.3 County Level of Service (LOS) Standards The County shall maintain LOS standards for use as part of the County's transportation planning including the traffic impact mitigation fee program, and the County's review and consideration of proposed land use legislation and discretionary development. For purposes of County transportation planning and review and consideration of proposed land use legislation and discretionary development, the County shall use the following minimum acceptable Level of Service (LOS) for road segment and intersection design standards within the Regional Road Network and all other County-maintained roadways: a. LOS-'C' for all Federal functional classification of Minor Collector (MNC) and Local roadways (L); and b. LOS-'D' for all Federal functional classifications except MNC and L, and Federal and State highways in the unincorporated area, except as otherwise provided in subparagraph (c and d); c. LOS-'E' for State Route 33 between the northerly end of the Ojai Freeway and the city of Ojai, Santa Rosa Road, Moorpark Road north of Santa Rosa Road, State Route 34 north of the city of Camarillo, and State Route 118 between Santa Clara Avenue and the city of Moorpark; d. LOS 'F' for Wendy Drive between Borchard Drive to Lois Avenue; and e. The LOS prescribed by the applicable city for all federal highways, state highways, city thoroughfares and city-maintained local roads located within that city, if the city has formally adopted and is implementing a General Plan policy, ordinance, or a reciprocal agreement with the County regarding development in the city that is intended to improve the LOS of County-maintained local roads and federal and state highways located within the unincorporated area of the county. f. At any intersection between two or more roads, each of which has a prescribed minimum acceptable LOS, the lower LOS of the roads shall be the minimum acceptable LOS for that intersection.	Consistent. Section 3.9, "Transportation and Circulation," of this EIR and the accompanying Transportation Impact Study (Appendix F-1 of this EIR) provides information regarding levels of service associated with the Project for consideration by the County for non-CEQA Project review purposes.
CTM-1.7 Pro Rata Share of Improvements The County shall require discretionary development that would generate additional traffic pays its pro rata share of the cost of added vehicle trips and the costs of necessary improvements to the Regional Road Network pursuant to the County's Traffic Impact Mitigation Fee Ordinance. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.9, "Transportation and Circulation," of this EIR and the accompanying Transportation Impact Study (Appendix F-1 of this EIR) provides information regarding levels of service associated with the Project for consideration by the County for non-CEQA Project review purposes, including assessment of potential fees and pro-rata share funding for road improvements.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
4.2 Regional Multimodal System	
CTM-2.28 Emergency Access The County shall ensure that all new discretionary projects are fully evaluated for potential impacts to emergency access. Mitigation of these impacts shall be handled on a project-by-project basis to guarantee continued emergency service operations and service levels. (RDR)	Consistent. This EIR evaluates potential conflicts with emergency responses and access at Impact TC-3 in Section 3.9 and concludes the Project would not have a significant impact on emergency access.
5.4 Wastewater Treatment and Disposal	
PFS-4.2 Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems The County may allow the use of onsite wastewater treatment systems that meet the state Water Resources Control Board Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Policy, Ventura County Sewer Policy, Ventura County Building Code, and other applicable County standards and requirements. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project includes an onsite septic system that would be designed in accordance with applicable standards and requirements.
5.6 Flood Control and Drainage Facilities	
PFS-6.1 Flood Control and Drainage Facilities Required for Discretionary Development The County shall require discretionary development to provide flood control and drainage facilities, as deemed necessary by the County Public Works Agency and Watershed Protection District. The County shall also require discretionary development to fund improvements to existing flood control facilities necessitated by or required by the development. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project includes stormwater runoff and drainage facilities.
PFS-6.5 Stormwater Drainage Facilities The County shall require that stormwater drainage facilities are properly designed, sited, constructed, and maintained to efficiently capture and convey runoff for flood protection and groundwater recharge. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project includes stormwater runoff and drainage facilities.
5.10 Parks and Recreational Facilities	
PFS-10.8 Discretionary Development near Trails The County shall require discretionary development near existing trails to mitigate or avoid adverse impacts to the existing trail system. Where appropriate, a condition of approval or other means of permanent dedicated trail access shall be provided. (RDR)	Consistent. Potential impacts of the Project on trails is evaluated in Impact LU-2 of this EIR and concludes that the Project would not limit or restrict public use of existing trail networks and open space areas.
5.11 Law Enforcement and Emergency Services	
PFS-11.4 Emergency Vehicles Access The County shall require all discretionary development to provide, and existing development to maintain, adequate access for emergency vehicles, including two points of access for subdivisions and multifamily developments. (RDR)	Consistent. This EIR evaluates potential conflicts with emergency responses and access at Impact TC-3 in Section 3.9 and concludes the Project would not have a significant impact on emergency access.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
5.12 Fire Protection	
PFS-12.3 Adequate Water Supply, Access, and Response Times for Firefighting Purposes The County shall prohibit discretionary development in areas that lack and cannot provide adequate water supplies, access, and response times for firefighting purposes. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project includes provisions for fire suppression water storage. Impact WR-6 in Section 3.10 of this EIR discusses that the Project must meet fire flow requirements as determined by the Ventura County Waterworks manual or the Ventura County Fire Protection District Fire Code, and mitigation measure MM WR-6 requires that the Permittee design and install sufficient storage and facilities for the provision of water for fire suppression at the site in accordance with specifications and requirements determined by the County.
PFS-12.4 Consistent Fire Protection Standards for New Development The County, in coordination with local water agencies and the Fire Protection District, shall require new discretionary development to comply with applicable standards for fire flows and fire protection. (RDR, IGC)	Consistent. The Project includes provisions for fire suppression water storage. Impact WR-6 in Section 3.10 of this EIR discusses that the Project must meet fire flow requirements as determined by the Ventura County Waterworks manual or the Ventura County Fire Protection District Fire Code, and mitigation measure MM WR-6 requires that the Permittee design and install sufficient storage and facilities for the provision of water for fire suppression at the site in accordance with specifications and requirements determined by the County.
6.1 Biological Resources	
COS-1.1 Protection of Sensitive Biological Resources The County shall ensure that discretionary development that could potentially impact sensitive biological resources be evaluated by a qualified biologist to assess impacts and, if necessary, develop mitigation measures that fully account for the impacted resource. When feasible, mitigation measures should adhere to the following priority: avoid impacts, minimize impacts, and compensate for impacts. If the impacts cannot be reduced to a less than significant level, findings of overriding considerations must be made by the decision-making body. (MPSP, IGC, RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.5, "Biological Resources," of this EIR provides an analysis of potential impacts of the Project on sensitive biological resources. Mitigation measures are identified that would reduce impacts to less than significant levels.
COS-1.4 Consideration of Impacts to Wildlife Movement When considering proposed discretionary development, County decision-makers shall consider the development's potential project-specific and cumulative impacts on the movement of wildlife at a range of spatial scales including local scales (e.g., hundreds of feet) and regional scales (e.g., tens of miles). (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.5, "Biological Resources," of this EIR provides an analysis of potential impacts of the Project on wildlife movement.
COS-1.5 Development Within Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors Development within the Habitat Connectivity and Wildlife Corridors overlay zone and Critical Wildlife Passage Areas overlay zone shall be subject to the applicable provisions and standards of these overlay zones as set forth in the Non-Coastal Zoning Ordinance. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.5, "Biological Resources," of this EIR provides an analysis of potential impacts of the Project on habitat connectivity and wildlife corridors and includes mitigation provisions to ensure implementation of overlay zone standards.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
COS-1.6 Discretionary Development on Hillsides and Slopes The County shall require discretionary development on hillsides and slopes, which have an average natural slope of 20 percent or greater in the area where the proposed development would occur, to be sited and designed in a manner that will minimize grading, alteration of natural land forms, and vegetation removal to avoid significant impacts to sensitive biological resources to the extent feasible. (RDR, MPSP)	Consistent. The Project would include mining and reclamation on hillsides and slopes. Section 3.5, "Biological Resources," of this EIR evaluates the potential impacts of the Project on biological resources and identifies mitigation measures that would avoid significant impacts.
COS-1.9 Agency Consultation Regarding Biological Resources The County shall consult with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Audubon Society, California Native Plant Society, National Park Service for development in the Santa Monica Mountains or Oak Park Area, and other resource management agencies, as applicable during the review of discretionary development applications to ensure that impacts to biological resources, including rare, threatened, or endangered species, are avoided or minimized. (MPSP, IGC, RDR)	Consistent. The County has and will continue to coordinate with resource agencies during the environmental review process. The agencies listed in policy COS-1.9 will receive notice and will be invited to comment on the Draft EIR.
COS-1.10 Evaluation of Potential Impacts of Discretionary Development on Wetlands The County shall require discretionary development that is proposed to be located within 300 feet of a wetland to be evaluated by a County-approved biologist for potential impacts on the wetland and its associated habitats pursuant to the applicable provisions of the County's Initial Study Assessment Guidelines. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project is located with 300 feet of wetlands areas. Section 3.5, "Biological Resources," of this EIR evaluates the potential impacts of the Project on wetlands and other waters and identifies mitigation measures that would avoid significant impacts.
COS-1.11 Discretionary Development Sited Near Wetlands The County shall require discretionary development to be sited 100 feet from wetland habitats, except as provided below. The 100-foot setback may be increased or decreased based upon an evaluation and recommendation by a qualified biologist and approval by the decision-making body based on factors that include, but may not be limited to, soil type, slope stability, drainage patterns, the potential for discharges that may impair water quality, presence or absence of endangered, threatened or rare plants or animals, direct and indirect effects to wildlife movement, and compatibility of the proposed development with use of the wetland habitat area by wildlife. Discretionary development that would have a significant impact on a wetland habitat shall be prohibited unless mitigation measures are approved that would reduce the impact to a less than significant level. Notwithstanding the foregoing, discretionary development that would have a significant impact on a wetland habitat on land within a designated Existing community may be approved in conjunction with the adoption of a statement of overriding considerations by the decision-making body. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project is located with 100 feet of wetlands areas. Section 3.5, "Biological Resources," of this EIR evaluates the potential impacts of the Project on wetlands and other waters and identifies mitigation measures that would avoid significant impacts.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
6.3 Scenic Resources	
COS-3.1 Scenic Roadways The County shall protect the visual character of scenic resources visible from state or County designated scenic roadways. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.2, "Visual Resources," of this EIR concludes that the Project site is not visible from designated or eligible scenic roadways.
COS-3.5 Ridgeline and Hilltop Preservation The County shall ensure that ridgelines and major hilltops remain undeveloped and that discretionary development is sited and designed to remain below significant ridgelines, except as required for communication or similar facilities. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.2, "Visual Resources," of this EIR evaluates potential visual impacts of the Project. Although the Project would result in expansion of disturbance on hillsides, the Project would not develop ridgelines or major hilltops.
COS-3.6 Open Space Character The County shall require discretionary development outside of Existing Communities be planned and designed to maintain the scenic open space character of the surrounding area, including view corridors from highways. Discretionary development should integrate design, construction, and maintenance techniques that minimize the visibility of structures from public viewing locations within scenic vistas. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.2, "Visual Resources," of this EIR evaluates potential visual impacts of the Project. The evaluation identifies mitigation measures to minimize the Project's visual impact and minimize the visibility of site activities and disturbed areas.
6.4 Cultural, Historical, Paleontological, and Archaeological Resources	
COS-4.2 (b) Cooperation for Tribal Cultural Resource Preservation For discretionary projects, the County shall request local tribes contact information from Native American Heritage Commission, to identify known tribal cultural resources. If requested by one or more of the identified local tribes, the County shall engage in consultation with each local tribe to preserve, and determine appropriate handling of, identified resources within the county. (IGC)	Consistent. As discussed in Section 3.6, "Cultural Resources," of this EIR (see Impact CR-3), the County notified local tribal representatives of the one tribe having requested such notice (Barbareño-Ventureño Band of Mission Indians) of the Project and the tribe's opportunity to request formal consultation. The Barbareño-Ventureño Band of Mission Indians did not request consultation and no tribal cultural resources were identified within the Project site.
COS-4.4 Discretionary Development and Tribal, Cultural, Historical, Paleontological, and Archaeological Resource Preservation The County shall require that all discretionary development projects be assessed for potential tribal, cultural, historical, paleontological, and archaeological resources by a qualified professional and shall be designed to protect existing resources. Whenever possible, significant impacts shall be reduced to a less-than-significant level through the application of mitigation and/or extraction of maximum recoverable data. Priority shall be given to measures that avoid resources. (RDR)	Consistent Section 3.6, "Cultural Resources," of this EIR provides the results of cultural resources evaluations conducted for the Project and concludes the Project would not result in significant impacts to cultural resources.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
COS-4.7 Cultural Heritage Board Review Prior to environmental review of discretionary development projects, the County shall initiate a records search request with the South Central Coastal Information Center and coordinate with the Cultural Heritage Board to identify sites of potential archaeological, historical, tribal cultural and paleontological significance, to ensure that all known resources have been properly identified. Should a site of archaeological, tribal, architectural, or historical significance be identified, the County shall provide an opportunity for the Cultural Heritage Board to include recommendations specific to the discretionary project and identified resource(s). If it is determined during the review that a site has potential archaeological, tribal, architectural, or historical significance, information shall be provided to the County Cultural Heritage Board for evaluation. Recommendations identified by the Cultural Heritage Board shall be provided to the appropriate decision-making body. (RDR)	Consistent Section 3.6, "Cultural Resources," of this EIR provides the results of cultural resources evaluations conducted for the Project and concludes the Project would not result in significant impacts to cultural resources. Associated with this analysis, records were requested from the South Central Coastal Information Center in 2010 and again in 2019, and resources identified through that search are considered in the cultural resources impact evaluation.
6.5 Soil and Mineral Resources	
COS-5.1 Soil Protection The County shall strive to protect soil resources from erosion, contamination, and other effects that substantially reduce their value or lead to the creation of hazards. (RDR, SO)	Consistent. The Project includes provisions for stockpiling and preventing erosion of topsoil.
COS-5.2 Erosion Control The County shall encourage the planting of vegetation on soils exposed by grading activities, not related to agricultural production, to decrease soil erosion. (RDR, PSR)	Consistent. The Project includes provisions for stabilization of mined areas through the proposed reclamation plan component of the Project.
COS-6.1 Balanced Mineral Resource Production and Conservation The County shall balance the development and conservation of mineral resources with economic, health, safety, and social and environmental protection values. (MPSP, IGC, RDR)	Consistent. County decisionmakers will consider the information in the Final EIR along with other factors when determining whether to approve the Project.
COS-6.3 Mineral Extraction Location Priority The County shall promote the extraction of mineral resources locally to minimize economic costs and environmental effects associated with transporting these resources. (IGC, JP)	Consistent. The Project would provide an ongoing source of local construction aggregate and would minimize effects of construction aggregate transportation that would otherwise occur were the Project supply of aggregates unavoidable. See Impact TC-1 in Section 3.9, "Transportation and Circulation," of this EIR for additional discussion.
7.1 Wildfire Hazards	
HAZ-1.4 Development in High Fire Hazard Severity Zones and Hazardous Fire Areas The County shall require the recordation of a Notice of Fire Hazard with the County Recorder for all new discretionary entitlements (including subdivisions and land use permits) within areas designated as Hazardous Fire Areas by the Ventura County Fire Department or High Fire Hazard Severity Zones by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). (RDR)	Consistent. Portions of the Project site are located within areas designated by CAL FIRE has Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (shown on EIR Figure 3.11). Separate from the CEQA process, the County will require recordation of any applicable notices per this policy.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
7.4 Geologic and Seismic Hazards	
HAZ-4.4 Discretionary Development Below Rocky Outcrops The County shall require discretionary development below rocky outcrops to evaluate and mitigate potential rockfall hazards including but not limited to by avoiding placement of structures that could be impacted by rockfall hazards, rock removal, rock anchoring, walls, fence barriers, or other similar systems. (RDR)	Consistent. Geotechnical and slope stability studies have been performed and ongoing studies during Project operation are required as mitigation in this EIR (Section 3.7).
HAZ-4.5 Soil Erosion and Pollution Prevention The County shall require discretionary development be designed to prevent soil erosion and downstream sedimentation and pollution. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project includes measures to control erosion from disturbed areas.
HAZ-4.6 Vegetative Resource Protection The County shall require discretionary development to minimize the removal of vegetation to protect against soil erosion, rockslides, and landslides. (SO)	Consistent. Project vegetation removal would be limited to that necessary for access to mineral resources in accordance with the Project mine plan.
HAZ-4.8 Seismic Hazards The County shall not allow development of habitable structures or hazardous materials storage facilities within areas prone to the effects of strong ground shaking, such as liquefaction, landslides, or other ground failures, unless a geotechnical engineering investigation is performed and appropriate and sufficient safeguards, based on this investigation, are incorporated into the project design. (RDR)	Consistent. Geotechnical studies prepared for the Project conclude that the Project is not within a liquefaction zone.
HAZ-4.9 Slope Development The County shall require geotechnical reports that demonstrate adequate slope stability and construction methods for building and road construction on slopes greater than 50 percent pursuant to the California Building Code Appendix J Section 108.6. (RDR)	Consistent. Geotechnical and slope stability studies have been performed and ongoing studies during Project operation are required as mitigation in this EIR (Section 3.7).
HAZ-4.12 Slope Drainage Drainage plans that direct runoff and drainage away from slopes shall be required for construction in hillside areas. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project would install and maintain stormwater runoff and drainage facilities to control runoff from slope areas.
HAZ-4.13 Design for Expansive Soils The County shall not allow habitable structures or individual sewage disposal systems to be placed on or in expansive soils unless suitable and appropriate safeguards are incorporated into the project design to prevent adverse effects. (RDR)	Consistent. This EIR (Section 3.7) evaluates the potential for expansive soils associated with fill placement and includes mitigation requiring additional studies during fill placement.
7.5 Hazardous Materials	
HAZ-5.2 Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Facilities The County shall require discretionary development involving facilities and operations which may potentially utilize, store, and/or generate hazardous materials and/or wastes be located in areas that would not expose the public to a significant risk of injury, loss of life, or property damage and would not disproportionally impact Designated Disadvantaged Communities. (SO)	Consistent. The Permittee will be required to comply with all conditions imposed by the Ventura County Integrated Waste Management Division pertaining to hazardous waste reduction, recycling, and storage.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
HAZ-5.5 Hazardous Waste Reduction at the Source The County shall, as part of the discretionary review process, require that hazardous wastes and hazardous materials be managed in such a way that waste reduction through alternative technology is the first priority, followed by recycling and on-site treatment, with disposal as the last resort. (RDR)	Consistent. The Permittee will be required to comply with all conditions imposed by the Ventura County Integrated Waste Management Division pertaining to hazardous waste reduction, recycling, and storage.
HAZ-5.6 Hazardous Materials – County Regulatory Oversight The County shall continue to provide regulatory oversight for all facilities or activities that store, use, or handle hazardous materials. (SO)	Consistent. The Applicant has an active California Environmental Reporting System (CERS) permit on file with the County Environmental Health Department and will be required to maintain compliance under the Project.
7.9 Noise	
HAZ-9.1 Limiting Unwanted Noise The County shall prohibit discretionary development which would be impacted by noise or generate project-related noise which cannot be reduced to meet the standards prescribed in Policy Haz-9.2. This policy does not apply to noise generated during the construction phase of a project. (SO)	Consistent. Section 3.8, "Noise and Vibration," of this EIR evaluates noise impacts of the Project and concludes that with implementation of Mitigation Measure MM NV-1 Project-generated noise levels would be reduced sufficient to avoid significant noise impacts and to meet applicable standards prescribed in Policy HAZ-9.2.
HAZ-9.2 Noise Compatibility Standards The County shall review discretionary development for noise compatibility with surrounding uses. The County shall determine noise based on the following standards: 1. New noise sensitive uses proposed to be located near highways, truck routes, heavy industrial activities and other relatively continuous noise sources shall incorporate noise control measures so that indoor noise levels in habitable rooms do not exceed Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) 45 and outdoor noise levels do not exceed CNEL 60 or Leq1H of 65 dB(A) during any hour. 4. New noise generators, proposed to be located near any noise sensitive use, shall incorporate noise control measures so that ongoing outdoor noise levels received by the noise sensitive receptor, measured at the exterior wall of the building, does not exceed any of the following standards: a. Leq1H of 55dB(A) or ambient noise level plus 3dB(A), whichever is greater, during any hour from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; b. Leq1H of 50dB(A) or ambient noise level plus 3dB(A), whichever is greater, during any hour from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.; and c. Leq1H of 45dB(A) or ambient noise level plus 3dB(A), whichever is greater, during any hour from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.	Consistent. Section 3.8, "Noise and Vibration," of this EIR evaluates noise impacts of the Project and concludes that with implementation of Mitigation Measure MM NV-1 Project-generated noise levels would be reduced sufficient to avoid significant noise impacts and to meet the standards prescribed in Policy HAZ-9.2 items 1 and 4.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
HAZ-9.4 Acoustical Analysis Required The County shall require an acoustical analysis by a qualified acoustical engineer for discretionary development involving noise exposure or noise generation in excess of the established standards. The analysis shall provide documentation of existing and projected noise levels at on-site and off-site receptors and shall recommend noise control measures for mitigating adverse impacts. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.8, "Noise and Vibration," of this EIR presents the noise impact evaluation for the Project prepared by qualified professionals.
HAZ-9.7 Noise Control Priorities The priorities for noise control for discretionary development shall be as follows: 1. Reduction of noise emissions at the source. 2. Attenuation of sound transmission along its path, using barriers, landform modification, dense plantings, building orientation and placement, and the like. 3. Rejection of noise at the reception point using noise control building construction, hearing protection or other means. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.8, "Noise and Vibration," of this EIR evaluates noise impacts of the Project and identified noise reduction and mitigation measures consistent with the priority hierarchy of this policy.
7.10 Air Quality	
HAZ-10.2 Air Quality Management Plan Consistency The County shall prohibit discretionary development that is inconsistent with the most recent adopted Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP), unless the Board of Supervisors adopts a statement of overriding considerations. (RDR)	Consistent. Project consistency with the Air Quality Management Plan is evaluated in Section 3.4, "Air Quality," of this EIR which concludes the Project would be consistent.
HAZ-10.3 Air Pollution Control District Rule and Permit Compliance The County shall ensure that discretionary development subject to Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (VCAPCD) permit authority complies with all applicable APCD rules and permit requirements, including the use of Best Available Control Technology (BACT) as determined by the VCAPCD. (RDR)	Consistent. Project operations are subject to a permit to operate (PTO) issued by the APCD and is required to comply with all conditions of the PTO.
HAZ-10.5 Air Pollution Impact Mitigation Measures for Discretionary Development The County shall work with applicants for discretionary development projects to incorporate bike facilities, solar water heating, solar space heating, incorporation of electric appliances and equipment, and the use of zero and/or near zero emission vehicles and other measures to reduce air pollution impacts and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.4, "Air Quality," of this EIR evaluates air pollutant and GHG emissions associated with the Project and identifies mitigation measures to reduce emissions to less than significant levels. Separate from this EIR, the County may also consider additional emissions reduction measures for incorporation to the Project.
HAZ-10.11 Air Quality Assessment Guidelines In evaluating air quality impacts, the County shall consider total emissions from both stationary and mobile sources, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. The County shall evaluate discretionary development for air quality impacts using the Air Quality Assessment Guidelines as adopted by the Ventura County Air Pollution Control District (APCD), except that emissions from APCD-permitted sources shall also be included in the analysis. The County shall revise the Initial Study Assessment Guides to implement this policy. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.4, "Air Quality," of this EIR evaluates air pollutant and GHG emissions associated with the Project based on Air Quality Assessment Guidelines and includes evaluation of emissions associated with APCD-permitted sources.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
HAZ-10.12 Conditions for Air Quality Impacts The County shall require that discretionary development that would have a significant adverse air quality impact shall only be approved if it is conditioned with all feasible mitigation measures to avoid, minimize or compensate (offset) for the air quality impact. The use of innovative methods and technologies to minimize air pollution impacts shall be encourage in project design. (RDR)	Consistent. Section 3.4, "Air Quality," of this EIR evaluates air pollutant and GHG emissions associated with the Project and concludes that with implementation of the identified mitigation measures the Project air quality impact would be less than significant.
8.1 Agricultural Land Preservation	
AG-1.2 Agricultural Land Use Designation The County shall ensure that discretionary development located on land designated as Agricultural on the General Plan Land Use Diagram and identified as Prime Farmland or Farmland of Statewide Importance on the State's Important Farmland Inventory is planned and designed to remove as little land as possible from potential agricultural production and to minimize impacts on topsoil. (RDR, MPSP)	Consistent. The Project would not affect areas of Prime Farmland and Unique Farmland located within the Project site.
AG-1.8 Avoid Development on Agricultural Land The County shall ensure that discretionary development located on land identified as Important Farmland on the State's Important Farmland Inventory shall be conditioned to avoid direct loss of Important Farmland as much as feasibly possible. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project would not affect areas of Prime Farmland and Unique Farmland located within the Project site.
AG-2.1 Discretionary Development Adjacent to Agriculturally Designated Lands The County shall ensure that discretionary development adjacent to Agriculturally designated lands does not conflict with agricultural use of those lands. (RDR)	Consistent. The Project would not adversely affect or conflict with the agricultural use of adjacent lands.
9.1 Water Supply	
WR-1.2 Watershed Planning The County shall consider the location of a discretionary project within a watershed to determine whether or not it could negatively impact a water source. As part of discretionary project review, the County shall also consider local watershed management plans when considering land use development. (MPSP, RDR)	Consistent. With implementation of mitigation identified in this EIR (Sections 3.7, 3.10, and 3.11) the Project would not result in significant impacts to surface water or groundwater resources.
WR-1.11 Adequate Water for Discretionary Development The County shall require all discretionary development to demonstrate an adequate long-term supply of water. (RDR)	Consistent/Pending. The Project requires a potable water supply and proposes the use of an onsite well for that purpose. This EIR (Sections 3.10 and 3.11) evaluate the potential use of the onsite well and include mitigation requiring the Permittee to cease operations if the minimum amount of water required for daily operations is not available and to not resume until an adequate supply is reestablished.

General Plan Policy	Consistency Determination
WR-1.12 Water Quality Protection for Discretionary Development The County shall evaluate the potential for discretionary development to cause deposition and discharge of sediment, debris, waste and other pollutants into surface runoff, drainage systems, surface water bodies, and groundwater. The County shall require discretionary development to minimize potential deposition and discharge through point source controls, storm water treatment, runoff reduction measures, best management practices, and low impact development. (RDR)	Consistent. With implementation of mitigation identified in this EIR (Sections 3.7, 3.10, and 3.11) the Project would not result in significant impacts to surface water or groundwater resources.
9.2 Water Quality	
WR-2.2 Water Quality Protection for Discretionary Development The County shall evaluate the potential for discretionary development to cause deposition and discharge of sediment, debris, waste, and other contaminants into surface runoff, drainage systems, surface water bodies, and groundwater. In addition, the County shall evaluate the potential for discretionary development to limit or otherwise impair later reuse or reclamation of wastewater or stormwater. The County shall require discretionary development to minimize potential deposition and discharge through point source controls, storm water treatment, runoff reduction measures, best management practices, and low impact development. (RDR)	Consistent. With implementation of mitigation identified in this EIR (Sections 3.7, 3.10, and 3.11) the Project would not result in significant impacts to surface water or groundwater resources.
WR-2.3 Discretionary Development Subject to CEQA Statement of Overriding Considerations – Water Quality and Quantity The County shall require that discretionary development not significantly impact the quality or quantity of water resources within watersheds, groundwater recharge areas or groundwater basins. (RDR)	Consistent. With implementation of mitigation identified in this EIR (Sections 3.7, 3.10, and 3.11) the Project would not result in significant impacts to surface water or groundwater resources.
9.3 Water Conservation and Reuse	
WR-3.2 Water Use Efficiency for Discretionary Development The County shall require the use of water conservation techniques for discretionary development, as appropriate. Such techniques include low-flow plumbing fixtures in new construction that meet or exceed the California Plumbing Code, use of graywater or reclaimed water for landscaping, retention of stormwater runoff for direct use and/or groundwater recharge, and landscape water efficiency standards that meet or exceed the standards in the California Model Water Efficiency Landscape Ordinance. (IGC, RDR)	Consistent. The Project proposes to continue use of recycled/tertiary treated water as the primary operational water supply for the Project. For building permits and other approvals necessary for the proposed security trailer and for landscape and reclamation irrigation, the County may consider addition water efficiency measures separate from the CEQA review process.
9.4 Groundwater	
WR-4.5 Discretionary Development Subject to CEQA Statement of Overriding Considerations – Water Quantity and Quality The County shall require that discretionary development shall not significantly impact the quantity or quality of water resources within watersheds, groundwater recharge areas or groundwater basins. (RDR)	Consistent. With implementation of mitigation identified in this EIR (Sections 3.7, 3.10, and 3.11) the Project would not result in significant impacts to surface water or groundwater resources.

Source: Policies obtained from Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020)

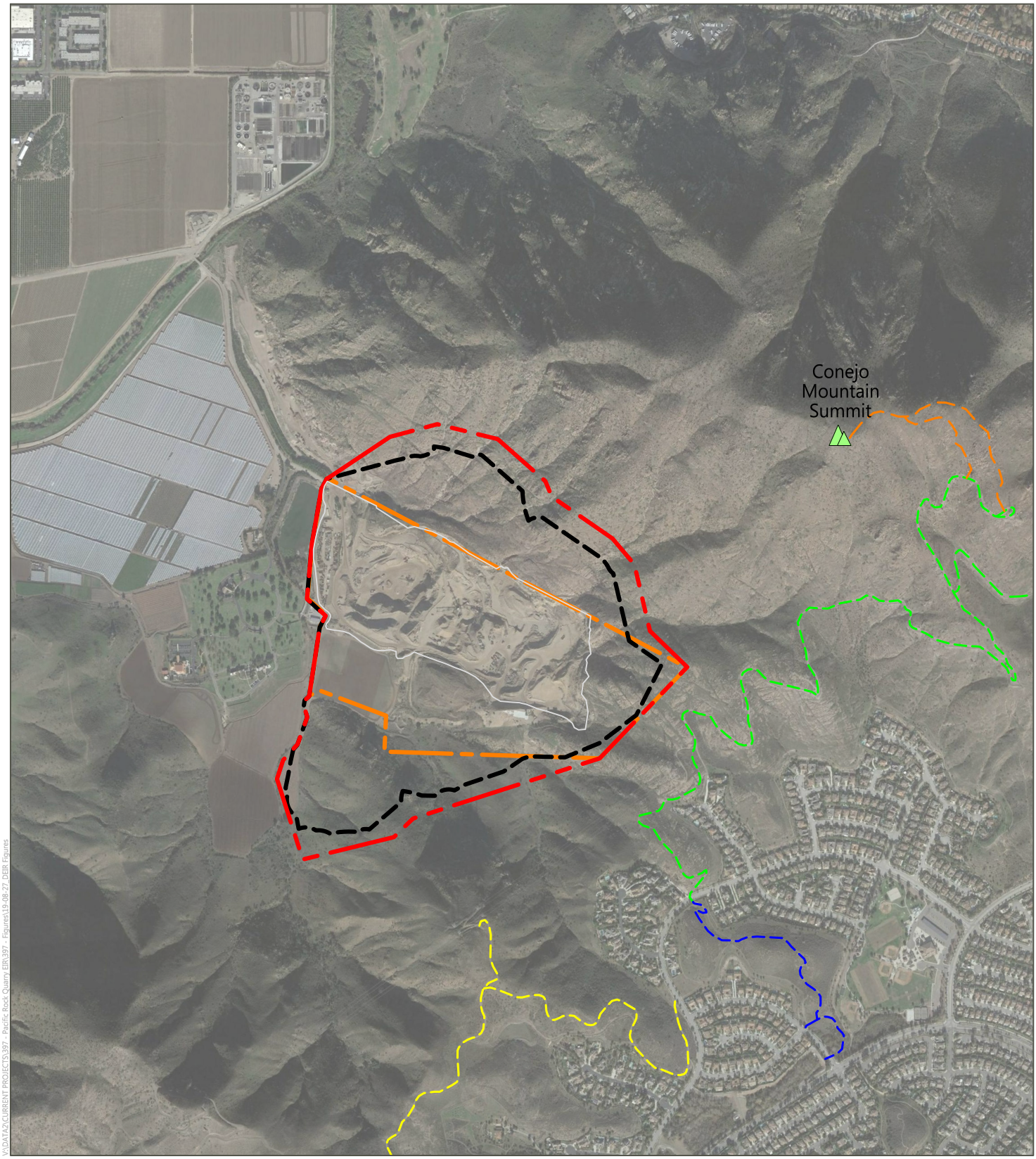
As noted previously and documented in Table 3.13-2, above, with implementation of mitigation identified in this EIR, this evaluation concludes that the Project would be consistent with Ventura County General Plan policies pertaining to avoidance and minimization of environmental effects. A final determination of General Plan consistency will be made by County decision-makers in consideration of approving the requested CUP and reclamation plan amendment.

Mitigation for Impact LU-3:

Implement all EIR mitigation measures.

3.12.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

Land use conflicts and General Plan consistency associated with the Project are project-specific issues. All other projects considered and approved by the County must be evaluated and deemed to be consistent with the Ventura County General Plan. None of the cumulative projects identified in Section 3.1.5 are considered to have the potential to result in land use or land use planning-related impacts in a manner with which the Project could contribute to result in a substantial contribution to land use conflicts. Therefore, the Project would not result in the potential for substantial cumulative effects associated with land use and planning.



SOURCE: Aerial–Google Earth Pro (flown 1-9-2019); Trails–digitized from maps of Newbury Park, Rancho Conejo and Dos Vientos provided at VenturaCountyTrails.org, (updated 2-12-2016); compiled by Benchmark Resources in 2020

- Proposed CUP Boundary
- Existing CUP Boundary
- Proposed Mine Area Boundary
- Existing Mine Area Boundary
- Conejo Mountain Summit Access Trails
- Powerline Trail
- Park View Trail
- Vista Del Mar Trail

BENCHMARK RESOURCES

N

0 600 1,200 2,400 Feet

Trails in Project Vicinity

PACIFIC ROCK QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

Figure 3.13-3

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SECTION 3.14 – ISSUES ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

SECTION 3.14–ISSUES ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines includes environmental checklists identifying potential impact issues associated with 20 different resource topics recommended for consideration when conducting an initial study. The Ventura County Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAG) (Ventura County, 2011) identifies 60 individual resources topics for consideration when conducting an initial study for a proposed project. Although the County determined that an EIR was necessary for the proposed Project and did not prepare an initial study for the Project, each of the resource topics identified in the CEQA Guidelines checklists and the Ventura County ISAG were considered during preparation of this EIR.

Sections 3.2 through 3.13 of this EIR provide additional discussion of the relevant criteria for each as of these items as related to the resource subject of the section and as related to individual impacts discussed in each section (Section 3.1.4 of this EIR provides an index of ISAG and CEQA resource topics and sections of this EIR in which each is evaluated). In some instances, it was determined during preparation of this EIR that the Project would not have the potential to result in impacts associated with certain CEQA and/or ISAG resource topics. This section provides a summary explanation of the issues eliminated from further analysis.

Each resource topic in the Ventura County ISAG also identifies the requirement that a project must be consistent with Ventura County General Plan policies associated with the resource. Section 3.13, "Land Use and Planning," of this EIR identifies and evaluates the Project consistency with policies in the Ventura County 2040 General Plan (Ventura County, 2020). The requirement for General Plan consistency is not repeated in the discussions of ISAG issues to consider below and, instead, is comprehensively addressed in Section 3.13.

3.14.1 Mineral Resources

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the following two issues for consideration of whether a project would result in a significant impact associated with mineral resources:

a) loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state; or
b) loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan.

Ventura County ISAG item 3a, "Mineral Resources – Aggregate," identifies the following for consideration whether a project would result in a significant impact associated with mineral resources:

a) be located on or immediately adjacent to land zoned Mineral Resource Protection (MRP) overlay zone, or adjacent to a principal access road for a site that is the subject of an existing aggregate Conditional Use Permit (CUP), and have the potential to hamper or preclude extraction of or access to the aggregate resources; or
b) have a cumulative impact on aggregate resources if, when considered with other pending and recently approved projects in the area, the project hampers or precludes extraction or access to identified resources.

The Project is not located in an area designated by Ventura County as a Mineral Resources Protection (MRP) overlay zone. The Project would produce and make economic use of a mineral (aggregate) resource providing value to the region and residents of the state. The extraction of mineral (aggregate)

resources for productive use is not considered to represent an adverse loss of a mineral resource; therefore, the CEQA and ISAG items above have been eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

Ventura County ISAG item 3b, "Mineral Resources – Petroleum," identifies the following for consideration whether a project would result in a significant impact associated with mineral resources:

a) be located on or immediately adjacent to any known petroleum resource area, or adjacent to a principal access road for a site that is the subject of an existing petroleum CUP, and have the potential to hamper or preclude access to petroleum resources.

The Project is not located in or adjacent to a known petroleum resource area and would not have the potential to hamper or preclude access to petroleum resources; therefore, the ISAG item above has been eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

3.14.2 Population and Housing

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the following two issues for consideration of whether a project would result in a significant impact associated with population and housing:

a) induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure); or
b) displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Ventura County ISAG item 26, "Housing," identifies the following for consideration whether a project would result in a significant impact associated with housing:

a) eliminate three or more dwelling units that are affordable to moderate-income households that are located within the Coastal Zone; and/or, lower-income households;
b) involve construction which has an impact on the demand for additional housing due to potential housing demand created by construction workers; or
c) result in 30 or more new full-time equivalent lower-income employees.

The Project would not induce planned or unplanned population growth, displace people, eliminate housing, or result in 30 or more employees; therefore, the ISAG item above has been eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

3.14.3 Public Services

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the following issues for consideration of whether a project would result in a significant impact associated with public services:

a) result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of, or need for, new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the following public services: fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, other public facilities.

The Project would not result in an increased need for public services that would result in a need for new or modified governmental facilities; therefore, this CEQA item has been eliminated from further consideration in this EIR. (Section 3.11 of this EIR addresses hazards and public safety which supports this conclusion.)

3.14.4 Utilities

Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines identifies the following issues for consideration of whether a project would result in a significant impact associated with utilities and service systems:

a) require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, or wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects;
b) have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years;
c) result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments; or
d) generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals; or
e) comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Ventura County ISAG item 30, "Utilities," identifies the following for consideration whether a project would result in a significant impact associated with utilities:

a) individually or cumulatively cause a disruption or re-routing of an existing utility facility; or
b) individually or cumulatively increase demand on a utility that results in expansion of an existing utility facility which has the potential for secondary environmental impacts.

Additionally, Ventura County ISAG items 29c and 29d address waste treatment and disposal facilities, "Solid Waste Management" and "Solid Waste Facilities", respectively.

Project impacts associated with water supply and water treatment are addressed in this EIR in Sections 3.10, "Water Resources," and Section 3.11, "Hazards and Public Safety." The Project is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase in solid waste generation in a manner that would exceed local capacity or impair the County's solid waste reduction goals. The Project would provide a location for recycling of asphalt and concrete construction debris which would provide for reducing solid waste that might otherwise require landfill disposal. The Project would also provide a location for the receipt of surplus soil and other inert waste material that might otherwise require landfill disposal. The Project would be required to comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste. The Project would be served by existing electrical utility facilities and would not require re-routing of existing facilities. For these reasons, the Project would not have the potential to result in significant impacts associated with utilities; therefore, these issues have been eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

3.14.5 Coastal Beaches and Sand Dunes

The Ventura County ISAG 9, "Coastal Beaches and Sand Dunes," identifies issues to consider for projects located within a County-designated coastal zone. The Project is not within a coastal zone; therefore, issues associated with coastal beaches and sand dunes have been eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

3.14.6 Waste Treatment & Disposal Facilities – Sewage Collection/Treatment Facilities

Ventura County ISAG item 29b addresses waste treatment and disposal facilities, "Sewage Collection/Treatment Facilities." The Project would utilize portable toilets and would install an onsite wastewater treatment system. Impacts associated with these systems are addressed in this EIR in Section 3.10, "Water Resources," and Section 3.11, "Hazards and Public Safety." The Project would not connect to a public wastewater treatment system; therefore, this issue has been eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

3.14.7 Education

Ventura County ISAG items 34a and 34b address education in terms of potential effects on "Schools" and "Public Libraries," respectively. ISAG issues to address involve potential interference with the operation of schools and libraries and potential increases in demand or limitation on access to such facilities. The Project would not have the potential to adversely affect school or library facilities, nor would the Project increase demand or decrease access to schools or libraries. Therefore, these issues have been eliminated from further consideration in this EIR.

CHAPTER 4 – GROWTH INDUCEMENT AND IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES

CHAPTER 4–GROWTH INDUCEMENT AND IRREVERSIBLE CHANGES

4.0 INTRODUCTION

CEQA requires that an EIR address a project's growth inducing impacts and that an EIR discuss significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by a project should it be implemented. This chapter presents an evaluation of these two CEQA-required considerations.

4.1 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

4.1.1 Introduction to Growth Inducement Assessment

CEQA Guidelines §15126.2(d) requires that the scope of the analysis "discuss the ways in which a proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment." Direct growth inducing impacts occur when a project imposes new burdens on a community by directly inducing population growth, or by leading to the construction of additional developments in the same area. Indirect growth could be associated with Project activities that remove physical obstacles to population growth, such as installation of transportation or utility infrastructure with excess capacity available to serve additional growth.

This section discusses whether the proposed Project would foster economic growth or population growth in the surrounding area. Issues considered include assessing whether the Project would result in:

- urbanization of land in a remote location, creating an intervening area of open space which then experiences pressure to be developed;
- removal of an impediment to growth through the establishment of an essential public service or the provision of new access to an area;
- economic expansion, population growth or the construction of additional housing occurs in the surrounding environment in response to economic characteristics of the project; and
- establish a precedent-setting action, such as a change in zoning or general plan amendment approval that makes it easier for future projects to gain approval.

Should the Project meet any one of these criteria, it is to be considered growth-inducing. However, it is also important to note that CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.2 states that growth in an area is not necessarily beneficial, detrimental or of little significance to the environment.

4.1.2 Urbanization of Land in Isolated Localities

The Project does not involve any new residential structures, urbanization, other land development or increased access to parcels that may be developed. The Project would continue an existing mining and processing operation, expand the area of mining, increase the permitted aggregate production and sales volume as compared to the existing operation, and provide for the receipt and processing of recycled concrete and asphalt. The Project would not induce job creation in a manner that would create an increase demand for housing. Therefore, the Project would not be growth-inducing under this criterion.

4.1.3 Removal of an Impediment to Growth

The Project would not result in the construction of onsite roads or installation of other infrastructure that would remove an existing barrier to growth or development within the Project site or adjacent areas. The Project would extend the life of an existing aggregate processing facility serving Ventura, Santa Barbara, and Los Angeles counties. The Project would provide continue to provide aggregate resources that would be used in these areas for construction. However, the Project is not and would not be the only source of construction aggregate in the region and would not remove a barrier to development associated with the availability of construction aggregate. Thus, the Project is not considered growth-inducing under this criterion.

4.1.4 Economic Growth

The Project would not directly result in the construction of any homes or facilities that would attract people to the area. The Project may generate increased revenue, including income tax revenue, associated with increased aggregate sales, recycled concrete and asphalt, and receipt of fill material. However, the potential increase in revenue-generating potential is not considered to have a direct relationship or substantial contribution to regional economic growth.

4.1.5 Precedent Setting Action

The Project would not result in a precedent-setting action such as a General Plan Amendment or change in zoning that could induce other similar changes leading to potential growth. Therefore, the project would not be growth-inducing under this criterion.

4.1.6 Conclusions Regarding Growth Inducement

As concluded in the discussions above, the Project is not considered growth-inducing and would, therefore, not result in potential environmental effects associated with induced growth.

4.2 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Public Resources Code §21100(b)(2)(B) and CEQA Guidelines §15126.2(c) require that the EIR discuss significant irreversible environmental changes that would be caused by the Project should it be implemented. According to Guidelines §15126(c):

> Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

The primary irreversible environmental changes associated with the Project would a commitment of nonrenewable resources needed for the continuation of mining, operation of processing facilities, and aggregate and other materials hauling activities associated with the operation. Nonrenewable and limited resources consumed during Project operation would include, but would not be limited to fuels and electricity (to the extent electricity used by the Project may be produced from non-renewable resources).

(Additional discussion of Project energy consumption is provided in Section 3.12 of this EIR.) The Project would result in the ongoing extraction of mineral resources for use as construction material within the region. Although such use could result in the irretrievable commitment of resources, the Project would not create the demand for aggregate and the demand for aggregate associated with regional construction projects would exist with or without the Project.

The Project site would be reclaimed to land suitable as agriculture and open space, and would be available for those uses after final reclamation. Environmental impacts that could occur as a result of the Project are presented in Sections 3.2 through 3.13 of this DEIR. Project compliance with applicable regulatory requirements and implementation of mitigation measures identified in this EIR would reduce the likelihood of irreversible damage from environmental impacts and accidents that could be associated with the Project.

As a result of the factors discussed above, the Project is not expected to result in significant environmental effects associated with irreversible environmental changes or commitments of resources.

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CHAPTER 5 – ALTERNATIVES

CHAPTER 5–ALTERNATIVES

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This section describes and evaluates alternatives to the proposed Project. CEQA requires that an EIR describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project or to the location of the project site that could feasibly avoid or lessen any significant environmental impacts of the project while attaining most of the project's basic objectives. An EIR also must compare and evaluate the environmental effects and comparative merits of the alternatives. The EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative, but it must consider a "reasonable range" or potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decision making and public participation. (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c).) The EIR must identify the environmentally superior alternative. If the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, the EIR must identify an environmentally superior alternative from among the other alternatives (Guidelines §15126.6(e)(2)).

5.2 SUMMARY OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND IMPACTS

5.2.1 Project Objectives

As discussed in Chapter 2 of this EIR and as stated in the Applicant's Project Description (Sespe Consulting, 2019a), the Applicant's primary objectives for the Project are to:

- meet the market demand for rip rap, stone, and aggregate products;
- continue to recover rock and rip rap in a manner that is environmentally responsible and to comply with applicable laws and regulations during material production, while maximizing the utilization of the resource and meeting the financial expectations of the owners;
- mine and process quality rock as aggregate for sale. Provide a reliable and sustainable, local source of high-quality aggregate to help meet the current and long-term demand for construction materials in Santa Barbara, Ventura, and Los Angeles counties;
- create additional, long-term supply of local aggregate reserves resulting in significantly shorter truck trip distances by reducing the need to haul aggregate from greater distances to meet demand and thereby reducing fuel consumption, air pollution, traffic congestion, road maintenance and the cost of delivery;
- provide an additional local source of construction aggregate with enough annual sales capacity (0.47 million tons) to encourage a healthy competitive market;
- create an environmentally sound project that would balance the recovery of the aggregate resource with the protection of other resources including wildlife habitat, groundwater, surface water, and air quality through environmentally sound and economically viable reclamation of the site in accordance with the approved reclamation plan;
- create a project that will return a significant amount of mined land back to agriculture and open space; and
- create local quality jobs, while also benefiting local downstream businesses and creating an enhanced tax revenue to the county.

5.2.2 Significant and Unavoidable Impacts of the Project

Sections 3.2 through 3.13 of this EIR identify Project impacts associated with various resources. The analyses identify one significant impact that, even with the implementation of mitigation, would remain significant and is thus considered significant and unavoidable. The impact is:

- Impact VIS-1: The Project would result in an adverse change to the visual character of the site and surrounding areas.

Consistent with CEQA's directive to identify and evaluate alternatives that could serve to avoid or reduce significant effects, the alternatives considered here include alternatives intended to avoid or minimize the significant and unavoidable impact of the Project. The Project impact analyses also identifies several significant and potentially significant impacts that would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation. This alternatives evaluation includes a qualitative assessment of the ability of each alternative to reduce impacts as compared to the Project.

5.3 ALTERNATIVES ELIMINATED FROM FURTHER CONSIDERATION

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c) requires that an EIR identify alternatives that were considered and rejected as infeasible, and briefly explain the reasons for rejection. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in any EIR are: (1) failure to meet most of the basic project objectives; (2) infeasibility; and (3) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts. The following alternatives were initially considered but were eliminated from further consideration in this EIR for the reasons discussed for each.

5.3.1 Alternative Locations

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(2)(a) states that "only locations that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project need be considered for inclusion in the EIR." An alternative location for the Project evaluated in this EIR would require the identification and design of a quarry and aggregate processing facilities at another location centrally located in the Los Angeles, Ventura, Santa Barbara County region capable of producing up to approximately 500,000 tons of construction-grade aggregate annually, or the identification of multiple quarry locations with similar combined capacity.

Successful development of a quarry and processing facilities at an alternative location would depend on a number of geologic, environmental, and economic factors. Site-specific studies would be required to evaluate a new site and its adequacy to support mining and processing operations. Issues to be addressed for a new site are dominated by availability and suitability. The site must be available for purchase or long-term lease with sufficient aggregate resources to justify the investment necessary to permit and operate a hard rock quarry. Extensive overall feasibility studies would need to be prepared to evaluate the following environmental and logistical concerns:

- quality and quantity of aggregate resource and its suitability to meet construction specifications for the intended market;
- water supply availability for processing and dust control;
- electricity service availability for processing equipment and ancillary uses;
- proximity to markets and potential increases in haul trip distances;
- available truck routes with sufficient road design;

- compatibility with surrounding land uses;
- potential environmental effects; and
- options and costs for reclamation and post-mining land uses.

No specific location with attributes necessary to accomplish the project objectives is known in enough detail to be identified as a specific alternative site. Because of the multiple and underdetermined site conditions that could exist at an alternative location, the County does not possess and cannot efficiently obtain sufficient information to determine whether potential mining and processing sites at alternative locations are available to feasibly meet the Project objectives.

Further, the Project is located at an existing quarry and processing plant site. Continued mining and operation at this site is reasonably expected to have efficiencies as compared to initiation of a new mining operation at an alternative site. These efficiencies would not be achieved through development of one or more quarries at a new quarry location where installation of access roads, utility infrastructure, and processing facilities would require additional investment not required at the site of the Project. Furthermore, mining and processing operations at an alternative site would also have the potential for visual resources impacts and would generate similar haul truck trips and vehicle miles traveled as compared to the Project. Thus, it cannot be assumed that alternative sites would avoid the significant and unavoidable impacts of the Project.

For these reasons, the County has properly considered and decided to eliminate alternative locations from further consideration.

5.3.2 Reduced Annual Aggregate Exports

Under a reduced annual aggregate exports alternative, the operation would be permitted to expand the mining area, continue the production of construction aggregates, add concrete and asphalt recycling at the site, and import fill material for reclamation, similar to that of the Project. However, under this alternative the maximum quantity of permitted annual aggregate exports from the site would be less than the proposed maximum annual amount of 468,000 tons that would be permitted under the Project. A reduction in the annual tonnage would reduce *annual average* daily factors such as haul loads and truck trips, but would not reduce *peak* daily factors for haul trucks, hours of operation, lighting, and other factors that would still be permitted to occur. A reduction in annual exports would likely have the secondary effect of reducing annual materials production onsite and could reduce or slow the rate of mine footprint expansion. Although this alternative would reduce annual average daily activities, it would not reduce peak daily activities. Although this alternative could serve to slow the rate of the mine area expansion, the anticipated increase in disturbance area of the Project and the associated significant and unavoidable visual resources impact associated with that expansion (Impact VIS-1) would not be avoided by this alternative. Thus, the reduced annual aggregate exports alternative is eliminated from further consideration.

5.3.3 Reduced Daily Haul Truck Trips

Under a reduced daily haul truck trips alternative, the operation would be limited to maximum loads in an amount less than the proposed 60-load (120-trip) maximum allowed under the existing CUP and proposed to be allowed with the CUP amendment proposed for the Project. As discussed in Section 3.9, "Transportation and Circulation," while the existing CUP allows for up to 60 daily loads, the County has determined that the number of existing daily loads under baseline conditions is 30 loads (60 trips) per day. Under a Reduced Daily Haul Truck Trips alternative, permitted daily loads would be reduced to a

level below the proposed 60 loads per day but not less than the 30 loads per day that occur under baseline conditions.

Such an alternative would effectively place a *cap* (i.e., maximum quantity) on daily sales of aggregate in an amount less than that of the existing permit and less than that proposed for the Project. Assuming that each haul truck transports approximately 25 tons of aggregate, 60 daily loads provides for exports of up to approximately 1,500 tons of material daily. Reducing the permitted number of daily loads would effectively reduce the amount of permitted daily exports commensurately (i.e., for each reduction of one daily load, a corresponding reduction of approximately 25 tons of exported material would occur). Reducing the number of permitted daily haul truck trips would affect the Applicant's ability to meet daily demand, resulting in reduced daily sales from the operation and resulting in possible reduction in annual sales as customers may seek alternative suppliers. Restricting the ability to supply materials by placing greater restrictions on daily exports than currently allowed and requested under the Project could prove infeasible and may be unable to meet the Applicant's objectives. Similarly, reducing the daily number of haul truck trips would also reduce the Applicant's ability to receive imported recycle material and imported fill material. Thus, the reduced daily haul truck trips alternative is eliminated from further consideration.

5.4 ALTERNATIVES EVALUATED IN THIS EIR

The County has identified the following alternatives for further evaluation in this EIR. With the exception of the No Project Alternative, which is included as required by CEQA, these alternatives are considered to represent a reasonable range of alternatives that could achieve at least some of the Project objectives.

5.4.1 Alternative A—No Project Alternative

Under the No Project Alternative, the Applicant/Operator would be required to reclaim the site as specified in the approved 1999 Reclamation Plan as amended by the 2011 Compliance Reclamation Plan Amendment, and the existing CUP would not be amended or renewed. No additional mining or processing would be permitted at the site under the No Project Alternative with the exception of mining that may be necessary to produce materials to complete reclamation of the site in accordance with the approved reclamation plan and compliance agreement. In the absence of a reclamation plan amendment, it is anticipated that reclamation in accordance with the compliance agreement would require placement of material on existing mined areas that exceed the slope requirements specified in the 2011 Compliance Reclamation Plan Amendment. The County anticipates that this material would be available from previously mined and stockpiled material at the site. All existing processing equipment, vehicles, structures, and other stored equipment would be removed from the site. Existing mined slopes would be reclaimed through the placement of backfill material and the site would be reclaimed as open space. Imported backfill material and reclamation of pad areas of the site for agricultural uses as proposed under the Project would not occur under the No Project Alternative. Section 5.5.1 provides an analysis of the environmental effects of the No Project Alternative as compared to the Project.

5.4.2 Alternative B—Reduced Mine Expansion Area

Under Alternative B, Reduced Mine Expansion Area, the requested CUP amendments involving increased days and hours of operation, daily haul truck limits (no change from existing CUP), operation of an asphalt and concrete recycling facility, installation of a 24-hour security trailer, and importing fill material for reclamation would be permitted, and reclamation of the site in a manner similar to that of the

Project would be approved. However, under Alternative B, the proposed expanded mine and reclamation area would be reduced in size. Reduction of the mine area footprint would reduce the total amount of material available over the life of the operation, but would not reduce daily or annual production rates as compared to the Project. Various configurations of a reduced mine expansion area could be achieved to reduce impacts on habitat, special-status species, wildlife movement corridors, mine site visibility, and other factors. The specific configuration of a reduced mine expansion area has not been developed for this EIR and is not required for a comparison of impacts of this alternative with the Project. Section 5.5.2 provides an analysis of the environmental effects of Alternative B as compared to the Project.

5.4.3 Alternative C—Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion

Under Alternative C, Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion, permitted hours of operation, daily truck trip limits (no change from existing CUP), and other site uses and activities would remain the same as permitted under the CUP 3817-3, but the County would approve expansion of the mine area and would approve the reclamation plan as proposed for the Project. Imports of fill material would be permitted for reclamation as under the Project. However, this alternative would not permit asphalt and concrete recycling operations, installation of a security trailer, or operations on Sundays or outside of the currently permitted hours of 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. As with the Project, export of aggregate and imports of fill material would be limited to a combined total of 60 loads (120 truck trips) per day. Section 5.5.3 provides an analysis of the environmental effects of Alternative B as compared to the Project.

5.5 ALTERNATIVES IMPACT EVALUATION

The following sections provide a qualitative analysis comparing each of the three alternatives discussed in Section 5.4 to the Project. Table 5-1, "Alternatives Evaluation Summary," at the end of this chapter provides a summary comparison of the alternatives to each of the individual Project impacts identified in Chapter 3 of this EIR.

5.5.1 Alternative A—No Project Alternative

The following sections discuss the potential impacts of Alternative A (No Project Alternative) as compared to key impacts of the Project for each resource subject addressed in Section 3.2 through 3.13 of this EIR.

Visual Resources

The No Project Alternative would reclaim the site through removal of all existing processing and other equipment. Existing mined slopes would be reclaimed through the placement of backfill material and the site would be reclaimed as open space. Although the No Project Alternative would result in some additional earthmoving activities and modifications to the existing site condition, no expansion of mine disturbance area would occur and any visual effects would be minor in comparison to changes to the existing visual character of the site. Under the No Project Alternative, revegetation of the site may be more limited than under the Project. Project Impact VIS-1 would result in substantial changes to the visual character of the site as compared to existing conditions and the visual resources impact of the Project is considered significant and unavoidable. The No Project Alternative would avoid this significant and unavoidable Project impact. The No Project Alternative would also not result in potential impacts associated with site lighting as reclamation activities under the No Project Alternative would be conducted during daylight periods between 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Saturday, consistent with the existing CUP.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

The No Project Alternative would not adversely affect agricultural or forestry resources. However, because the Project would not result in significant impacts to agriculture or forestry resources, the No Project Alternative would not provide agricultural or forestry resources benefits in comparison to the Project. The No Project Alternative would not result in post-reclaimed conditions of agricultural/grazing lands that would occur as a result of the Project.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases

The No Project Alternative would generate air pollutant and GHG emissions associated with equipment operation for final site reclamation, but would not generate emissions associated with offsite transport of material. Emissions under the No Project Alternative would occur only for the limited period of time required to complete reclamation, which is expected to require no more than five years to complete as opposed to the proposed 35 years of additional mining and reclamation that would occur under the Project. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant air quality or GHG impacts, the No Project Alternative would not serve to avoid a significant air quality or GHG impact.

Biological Resources

Activities associated with final reclamation under the No Project Alternative would result in limited, if any, disturbance of previously undisturbed habitat. This alternative would have limited potential to adversely affect special-status species and would not adversely affect or reduce wildlife movement corridors. Under the Project, the Applicant would be required to minimize impacts to special-status species and habitat in compliance with state and federal endangered species act requirements and provide compensation for any such impacts. Any such impacts and compensatory mitigation requirements under the No Project Alternative would be substantially less than those of the Project due to the greater extent of habitat disturbance associated with the Project. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant biological resources impacts, the No Project Alternative would not serve to avoid a significant biological resources impact.

Cultural Resources

The No Project Alternative would not adversely affect cultural resources. However, because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts to cultural resources, the No Project Alternative would not provide cultural resources benefits in comparison to the Project.

Geology and Soils

Reclamation activities associated with the No Project Alternative would have the potential for adverse impacts associated with geology and soils resources, but to a lesser extent than those of the Project. Potential slope stability impacts would be addressed under the No Project Alternative through ensuring the design of final slopes meets sufficient factors of safety under static and seismic conditions. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with geology or soils resources, the No Project Alternative would not serve to avoid significant geology or soils impacts.

Noise and Vibration

Reclamation activities associated with the No Project Alternative would have the potential for adverse impacts associated with noise and vibration, but to a much lesser extent than those of the Project. Potential impacts would be limited to noise and vibration associated with completion of reclamation and would not be expected to exceed noise or vibration levels that occur under existing operations. Because

the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with noise or vibration, the No Project Alternative would not serve to avoid significant noise or vibration impacts.

Transportation and Circulation

Reclamation activities associated with the No Project Alternative would not generate offsite haul truck trips and would result in the elimination of haul truck trips that currently occur under baseline conditions. Thus, the No Project Alternative would avoid transportation and circulation impacts associated with the Project. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with transportation and circulation, the No Project Alternative would not serve to avoid significant transportation or circulation impacts.

Water Resources

Reclamation activities associated with the No Project Alternative would have the potential for adverse impacts associated with water resources, but to a lesser extent than those of the Project. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with water resources, the No Project Alternative would not serve to avoid significant water resources impacts.

Hazards and Safety

Reclamation activities associated with the No Project Alternative would have the potential for adverse impacts associated hazards, but to a much lesser extent than those of the Project. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with hazards or safety, the No Project Alternative would not serve to avoid significant hazards or safety impacts.

Energy

Reclamation activities associated with the No Project Alternative would require energy use primarily for fuel associated with operation of reclamation equipment. It is anticipated that such fuel use would not result in the wasteful or inefficient use of energy for the purposes of reclamation. Because the Project, would not result in significant impacts associated with energy use, the No Project Alternative would not serve to avoid a significant impact associated with energy.

Land Use and Planning

Reclamation activities under the No Project Alternative would not have the potential to conflict with adjacent land uses or land use plan policies, as reclamation would occur as previously approved and would not expand activities beyond those currently occurring on the site. Because the Project, with mitigation and with additional conditions of approval as may be necessary to ensure consistency with General Plan policies, would not result in significant impacts associated with hazards or safety, the No Project Alternative would not serve to avoid significant land use or planning impacts.

5.5.2 Alternative B—Reduced Mine Expansion Area

The following sections discuss the potential impacts of Alternative B (Reduced Mine Expansion Area) as compared to key impacts of the Project for each resource subject addressed in Section 3.2 through 3.13 of this EIR.

Visual Resources

The reduced mine footprint of Alternative B would result in less visible disturbance as compared to the Project. The reduced disturbance would reduce the severity of Project Impact VIS-1, and depending on

the reduced mine expansion area design and amount of reduction, this alternative would have the potential to avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impact associated with effects on visual character. Alternative B would also have a reduced potential for impacts associated with lighting due to the reduce expansion area and reduce extent of lighting required for mining and operations.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Alternative B would not adversely affect agricultural or forestry resources. However, because the Project would not result in significant impacts to agriculture or forestry resources, Alternative B would not provide agricultural or forestry resources benefits in comparison to the Project.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases

Alternative B would generate air pollutant and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions similar to emissions under the Project. The reduced mining area of Alternative B would increase the distance between mining activities and adjacent receptors, depending on a final footprint determination for this alternative. However, Alternative B would not be expected to avoid or substantially lessen any of the Project-related air quality or greenhouse gas emissions. As with the Project, air quality and GHG emissions under Alternative B would be expected to be less than significant with implementation of mitigation identified for the Project.

Biological Resources

Alternative B would reduce the amount of new disturbance associated with the expanded mining area. Depending on the final footprint configuration for Alternative B, Project impacts associated with effects on jurisdictional waters and other important habitats, special-status plant and animal species, and wildlife movement corridors could be reduced as compared to the Project. Under the Project, the Applicant would be required to minimize impacts to special-status species and habitat in compliance with state and federal endangered species act requirements and provide compensation for any such impacts. Such impacts and compensatory mitigation requirements under Alternative B would likely be less than those of the Project due to the greater extent of habitat disturbance associated with the Project. However, because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant biological resources impacts, Alternative B would not serve to avoid a significant biological resources impact.

Cultural Resources

Alternative B would have a lesser potential for disturbance of unknown resources that may be present within the Project expansion area. However, because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts to cultural resources, Alternative B would not provide cultural resources benefits in comparison to the Project.

Geology and Soils

Alternative B would have the potential for adverse impacts associated with geology and soils resources similar to those of the Project, but with reduced potential severity due to Alternative B's reduced footprint. Potential impacts of Alternative B would be addressed through similar design and operational requirements as those of the Project, and mitigation identified for the Project would also be applicable under Alternative B. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with geology or soils resources, Alternative B would not serve to avoid significant geology or soils impacts.

Noise and Vibration

Alternative B would have the potential for adverse impacts associated with noise and vibration similar to those of the Project, but with reduced potential severity due to the greater distance of mining activities and adjacent sensitive receptors that would be possible under this alternative's reduced mine footprint. Potential impacts of Alternative B would be addressed through similar design and operational requirements as those of the Project, and noise mitigation identified for the Project would also be applicable under Alternative B. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with noise or vibration, the Alternative B would not serve to avoid significant noise or vibration impacts.

Transportation and Circulation

Alternative B would have the potential for offsite haul truck trips and other transportation-related impacts similar to those of the Project. Because the Project would not result in significant impacts associated with transportation and circulation, Alternative B would not serve to avoid significant transportation or circulation impacts.

Water Resources

Alternative B would have the potential for adverse impacts associated with water resources similar to those of the Project, but with reduced potential severity due to the reduced area of disturbance under Alternative B. Potential water resources impacts of Alternative B would be addressed through similar design and operational requirements as those of the Project, and mitigation identified for the Project would also be applicable under Alternative B. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with water resources, Alternative B would not serve to avoid significant water resources impacts.

Hazards and Safety

Alternative B would have the potential for adverse impacts associated hazards similar to those of the Project. Potential hazards and safety impacts of Alternative B would be addressed through similar design and operational requirements as those of the Project, and mitigation identified for the Project would also be applicable under Alternative B. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with hazards or safety, Alternative B would not serve to avoid significant hazards or safety impacts.

Energy

Alternative B would require energy use similar to that needed for the Project. As with the Project, it is anticipated that such fuel use would not result in the wasteful or inefficient use of energy. Because the Project, would not result in significant impacts associated with energy use, Alternative B would not serve to avoid a significant impact associated with energy.

Land Use and Planning

Alternative B would have a similar potential for land use and planning impacts as compared to the Project. The reduced footprint of Alternative B could be expected to reduce potential land use conflicts associated with adjacent land uses, including public open space and trails and residential areas. Because the Project, with mitigation, would be consistent with General Plan policies associated with avoidance and minimization of environmental effects, Alternative B would not serve to avoid significant land use or planning impacts.

5.5.3 Alternative C—Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion

The following sections discuss the potential impacts of Alternative C (Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion) as compared to key impacts of the Project for each resource subject addressed in Section 3.2 through 3.13 of this EIR.

Visual Resources

Alternative C would result in a similar potential for impacts associated with changes to visual character as compared to the Project and would not be expected to avoid the Project's significant and unavoidable impact (Impact VIS-1). Alternative C would reduce the potential for impacts associated with site lighting, as operations would be conducted during daylight periods between 7:00 AM and 4:00 PM, Monday through Saturday, consistent with the existing CUP.

Agriculture and Forestry Resources

Alternative C would not adversely affect agricultural or forestry resources. However, because the Project would not result in significant impacts to agriculture or forestry resources, Alternative C would not provide agricultural or forestry resources benefits in comparison to the Project.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases

Alternative C would generate air pollutant and greenhouse gas emissions similar to emissions under the Project, but the more limited activities that would be permitted under Alternative C would result in reduced emissions as compared to the Project. Air quality and GHG impacts of Alternative C would be reduced in severity as compared to the Project due to the reduced operations under this alternative. As discussed in Section 3.3 of this EIR, reduction in aggregate production and concrete and asphalt recycling at the Project site would likely result in a corresponding increase in production and recycling activities at another site in which case air pollutant and GHG emissions would still occur. Thus, although Alternative C would have the potential to reduce local emissions associated with activities at and near the Project site as compared to the Project, Alternative C would not necessarily result in a reduction in regional air pollutant and GHG emissions.

Biological Resources

Alternative C would result in similar ground disturbance as the Project and would have similar potential for effects on special-status species and habitat, however, the severity of these effects and need for compensatory or other mitigation would be reduced under Alternative C. The reduced hours of operation under Alternative C would reduce the severity of potential impacts on wildlife and the wildlife movement corridor as compared to the Project. Under the Project, the Applicant would be required to minimize impacts to special-status species and habitat in compliance with state and federal endangered species act requirements and provide compensation for any such impacts. Such impacts and compensatory mitigation requirements under Alternative C would likely be similar to that of the Project. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant biological resources impacts, Alternative C would not serve to avoid a significant biological resources impact.

Cultural Resources

Alternative C would result in similar ground disturbance as the Project and would have similar potential for disturbance of unknown resources that may be present within the Project expansion area. Because the

Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts to cultural resources, Alternative C would not provide cultural resources benefits in comparison to the Project.

Geology and Soils

Alternative C would have the potential for adverse impacts associated with geology and soils resources similar to those of the Project. Potential impacts of Alternative C would be addressed through similar design and operational requirements as those of the Project, and mitigation identified for the Project would also be applicable under Alternative C. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with geology or soils resources, Alternative C would not serve to avoid significant geology or soils impacts.

Noise and Vibration

Alternative C would have the potential for adverse impacts associated with noise and vibration similar to those of the Project, but with reduced potential severity due to the more limited hours and days of operation as compared to the Project. Potential impacts of Alternative C would be addressed through similar design and operational requirements as those of the Project, and noise mitigation identified for the Project would also be applicable under Alternative C. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with noise or vibration, the Alternative C would not serve to avoid significant noise or vibration impacts.

Transportation and Circulation

Alternative C would have the potential offsite haul truck trips and other transportation-related impacts similar to those of the Project. Because the Project would not result in significant impacts associated with transportation and circulation, the Alternative C would not serve to avoid significant transportation or circulation impacts.

Water Resources

Alternative C would have the potential for adverse impacts associated with water resources similar to those of the Project. Potential water resources impacts of Alternative C would be addressed through similar design and operational requirements as those of the Project, and mitigation identified for the Project would also be applicable under Alternative C. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with water resources, Alternative C would not serve to avoid significant water resources impacts.

Hazards and Safety

Alternative C would have the potential for adverse impacts associated hazards similar to those of the Project. Potential hazards and safety impacts of Alternative B would be addressed through similar design and operational requirements as those of the Project, and mitigation identified for the Project would also be applicable under Alternative C. Because the Project, with mitigation, would not result in significant impacts associated with hazards or safety, Alternative C would not serve to avoid significant hazards or safety impacts.

Energy

Alternative C would require energy use similar to that needed for the Project, although less fuel and electricity would be required due to the reduced hours of operations and reduced processing (e.g., no recycle operations) under Alternative C. As with the Project, it is anticipated that energy use under

Alternative C would not result in the wasteful or inefficient use of energy. Because the Project, would not result in significant impacts associated with energy use, Alternative C would not serve to avoid a significant impact associated with energy.

Land Use and Planning

Alternative C would have a similar potential for land use and planning impacts as compared to the Project. The more limited operational hours of Alternative C could be expected to reduce potential land use conflicts associated with adjacent land uses, including public open space and trails and residential areas, by reducing lighting and noise associated with early morning, evening, and Sunday operations. Because the Project, with mitigation, would be consistent with General Plan policies associated with avoidance and minimization of environmental effects, Alternative C would not serve to avoid significant land use or planning impacts.

5.6 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

CEQA §15126.6(e)(2) requires that an EIR identify the environmentally superior alternative. CEQA also requires that if the environmentally superior alternative is the No Project Alternative, the EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative from the remaining alternatives. In consideration of the alternatives evaluation herein, the No Project Alternative would result in fewer, or no, impacts as compared to the Project and the other alternatives. As such, the EIR must identify the environmentally superior alternative from the remaining alternatives – Alternatives B and C.

Based on the analysis above and excluding the No Project Alternative, Alternative B is considered the environmentally superior alternative. Alternatives B and C would each have the potential to reduce the severity of certain Project impacts. Alternative C would have the potential to reduce air pollutant emissions by reducing onsite activities and offsite hauling as compared to the Project. However, as discussed previously in this EIR, limiting production at the site is reasonably anticipated to result in a corresponding increase in production and associated air pollutant emissions at other locations in the region. Thus, Alternative C could reduce local emissions as compared to the Project, but would not necessarily have a regional air quality benefit.

Alternative B would reduce the potential for visual impacts by reducing the area of disturbance as compared to the Project and would have the potential to avoid the significant and unavoidable Project Impact VIS-1. Although not necessary to address significant and unavoidable impacts, Alternative B would also have the potential to reduce other Project impacts including those related to biological resources, air quality, noise and vibration, and land use. For these reasons, Alternative B, the Reduced Mine Expansion Area alternative, is considered the environmentally superior alternative.

As discussed previously, the conclusion that Alternative B is the environmentally superior alternative is not a determination that Alternative B would serve to effectively achieve the Project objectives and is not a determination that Alternative B is an economically viable and feasible option for the Applicant. However, for the purposes of the County's CEQA review of the Project, Alternative B is considered the environmentally superior alternative for the reasons discussed above.

Table 5-1. Alternatives Evaluation Summary

Project	Alternative A No Project Alternative	Alternative B Reduced Mine Expansion Area	Alternative C Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion
VISUAL RESOURCES			
Impact VIS-1: The Project would result in an adverse change to the visual character of the site and surrounding areas.	None and would avoid significant and unavoidable Project impact	Less with potential to avoid significant and unavoidable Project impact	Less but not likely to avoid significant and unavoidable Project impact
Impact VIS-2: Project lighting for operations during early morning and evening periods would create the potential for light spill and night sky lighting.	Less	Less	Less
Impact VIS-3: The Project could result in daytime glare.	Less	Less	Less
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES			
Impact AG-1: The Project could result in the conversion or otherwise adversely affect Prime Farmland and Unique Farmland.	Similar	Similar	Similar
Impact AG-2: The Project would continue and expand mining activities in areas subject to a Land Conservation Act contract.	Similar	Similar	Similar
AIR QUALITY AND GREENHOUSE GASES			
Impact AQ-1: Project activities would generate air pollutant emissions that could affect regional air quality.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact AQ-2: Project emissions of toxic air contaminants would increase cancer and non-cancer health risk.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact AQ-3: Project greenhouse gas emissions could contribute to global climate change.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact AQ-4: Project operations could generate odors.	Less	Similar	Less

Project	Alternative A No Project Alternative	Alternative B Reduced Mine Expansion Area	Alternative C Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion
Impact AQ-5: Project activities associated with final site reclamation would result in air pollutant and GHG emissions.	Less	Similar	Less
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES			
Impact BIO-1: Project ground disturbance and mining within proposed expansion areas could directly or indirectly impact nesting birds protected by the MBTA and the California Fish and Game Code Section 3503.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact BIO-2: Project disturbance within proposed expansion areas would result in the loss of special-status plants.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact BIO-3: Vegetation removal, surface disturbance, and mining and processing operations could result in the loss of habitat and direct and indirect adverse effects to special-status wildlife species.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact BIO-4: Ground disturbance associated with mining and reclamation within mine expansion areas could directly and indirectly impact wetlands and waters of the U.S. and/or waters of the State.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact BIO-5: Vegetation clearing in mine expansion areas would result in the direct removal of Ventura County Protected Trees.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact BIO-6: Project implementation would directly and indirectly affect wildlife movement opportunities within the Santa Monica-Sierra Madre Connection.	Less	Less	Similar

Project	Alternative A No Project Alternative	Alternative B Reduced Mine Expansion Area	Alternative C Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion
CULTURAL RESOURCES			
Impact CR-1: Project-related ground disturbance would have the potential to adversely affect historical and archaeological resources.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact CR-2: Project-related ground disturbance would have the potential to disturb human remains.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact CR-3: Project-related ground disturbance and other activities would create the potential to cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource(s) if such resource(s) are present within or adjacent to the site.	Less	Less	Similar
GEOLOGY AND SOILS			
Impact GS-1: Project-related ground disturbance and other activities would create the potential for impacts to paleontological resources.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact GS-2: Project excavation could result in unstable slopes.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact GS-3: Placement of fill material for reclamation could create the potential for hazards associated with liquefaction, landslides/mudflow, expansive soils, and subsidence.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact GS-4: Project ground disturbance and stormwater runoff from disturbed areas could result in increased erosion and loss of topsoil.	Less	Less	Similar

Project	Alternative A No Project Alternative	Alternative B Reduced Mine Expansion Area	Alternative C Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion
Impact GS-5: The Project septic system would have the potential to be located in areas with soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of the proposed septic system.	Less	Similar	Less
NOISE AND VIBRATION			
Impact NV-1: Onsite mining, processing, and reclamation activities could result in noise levels at residential and noise-sensitive locations that exceed applicable standards.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact NV-2: Offsite materials hauling could result in noise levels at residential and other noise-sensitive locations that exceed applicable standards.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact NV-3: Project blasting could result in groundborne vibration at residential and other sensitive locations that exceed applicable structural damage or annoyance thresholds.	Less	Less	Similar
TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION			
Impact TC-1: Potential for the Project to contribute to regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT) associated with haul trucks and worker trips.	Less	Similar	Similar
Impact TC-2: Potential for the Project to increase transportation-related hazards on public or private roads due to design or incompatible uses.	Less	Similar	Similar
Impact TC-3: Potential for the Project to conflict with emergency response or emergency access.	Less	Similar	Similar

Project	Alternative A No Project Alternative	Alternative B Reduced Mine Expansion Area	Alternative C Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion
Impact TC-4: Potential for the Project to conflict with bicycle and pedestrian circulation.	Less	Similar	Similar
Impact TC-5: Potential for the Project to conflict with transit operations.	Less	Similar	Similar
WATER RESOURCES			
Impact WR-1: Project groundwater consumption could affect the quantity of groundwater available at and adjacent to the Project site.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact WR-2: Project mining and reclamation activities would create the potential to adversely affect groundwater and surface water quality.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact WR-3: The Project could adversely affect surface water quality due to increased runoff, erosion, siltation, and inadequate stormwater storage capacity.	Less	Less	Similar
Impact WR-4: The Project's increased use of reclaimed wastewater would reduce the quantity of surface water available for beneficial uses downstream within Conejo Creek and Calleguas Creek.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact WR-5: The Project requires a long-term, reliable source of water.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact WR-6: The Project must meet fire flow requirements as determined by the Ventura County Waterworks manual or the Ventura County Fire Protection District Fire Code.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact WR-7: The Project could release pollutants, including sediment, due to project inundation in flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones.	Less	Similar	Similar

Project	Alternative A No Project Alternative	Alternative B Reduced Mine Expansion Area	Alternative C Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion
HAZARDS AND PUBLIC SAFETY			
Impact HAZ-1: Improper storage, use, or disposal of hazardous materials and waste could result in adverse impacts to the environment.	Less	Similar	Similar
Impact HAZ-2: The Project has the potential to impact public health associated with septage waste generation and disposal.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact HAZ-3: The Project could create public health risk associated with potential release of contaminants that could be contained in recycle asphalt and concrete and fill material imported to the site.	Less	Similar	Less
Impact HAZ-4: The Project could result in public health impacts related to breeding and/or harborage of vectors of disease, such as mosquitoes, due to standing water onsite.	Less	Similar	Similar
Impact HAZ-5: The Project could pose a public safety risk associated with unauthorized public access to mine and processing areas.	Less	Similar	Similar
Impact HAZ-6: The Project would create the potential for increased risk to public safety associated with the transport, handling, storage, and use of blasting agents.	Less	Similar	Similar
Impact HAZ-7: The Project would involve activities that create potential sources of fire ignition and could increase the potential for wildland fires.	Less	Similar	Similar
Impact HAZ-8: The Project could increase the demand for police, fire protection, and other emergency services.	Less	Similar	Similar

Project	Alternative A No Project Alternative	Alternative B Reduced Mine Expansion Area	Alternative C Continuation of Existing Operations with Mine Expansion
ENERGY			
Impact EN-1: The Project would result in increased use of diesel fuel and electricity.	Less	Similar	Similar
LAND USE			
Impact LU-1: The Project could conflict with adjacent land uses or adversely affect community character.	Less	Similar	Similar
Impact LU-2: The Project could adversely affect recreational resources.	Less	Similar	Similar
Impact LU-3: Project consistency with Ventura County General Plan policies.	Less	Similar	Similar

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CHAPTER 6 – LIST OF PREPARERS

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CHAPTER 7 – REFERENCES

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BENCHMARK RESOURCES

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