

DRAFT
CEQA INITIAL STUDY AND
SUBSEQUENT MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

AMENDMENT TO USE PERMIT (UP-06; 9-2) TO ALLOW FOR
EXTENDED HOURS OF OPERATION

GEORGE REED, INC.
JACKSON VALLEY QUARRY
(CA MINE ID No. 91-03-0020)

AMADOR COUNTY, CA

January 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	Background.....	1
1.2	Environmental Review	1
2.0	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	2
2.1	Project Title and Location	2
2.2	Lead Agency Name and Address.....	2
2.3	Project Sponsor’s Name and Address	3
2.4	Assessor Parcels, Ownership, Zoning, and General Plan Designations.....	3
2.5	Description of Project	3
2.6	Surrounding Land Uses and Setting.....	4
2.7	Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required	4
3.0	CEQA EVALUATION	5
3.1	Environmental Factors Potentially Affected	5
3.2	Evaluation of Environmental Impacts	5
I.	AESTHETICS.	6
II.	AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES.....	8
III.	AIR QUALITY.	10
IV.	BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES.....	11
V.	CULTURAL RESOURCES.	14
VI.	ENERGY.	16
VII.	GEOLOGY AND SOILS.	17
VIII.	GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS.	19
IX.	HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.....	20
X.	HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY.....	22
XI.	LAND USE AND PLANNING.....	24
XII.	MINERAL RESOURCES.	25
XIII.	NOISE.	26
XIV.	POPULATION AND HOUSING.	32
XV.	PUBLIC SERVICES.....	33
XVI.	RECREATION.....	35
XVII.	TRANSPORTATION	36
XVIII.	TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES.	38
XIX.	UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS.	40

XX.	WILDFIRE.....	41
XXI.	MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.....	43

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

George Reed, Inc. (“GRI”) owns and operates a fully-permitted aggregate mining site known as the Jackson Valley Quarry (“JVQ” or “Site”) located on the south side of Highway 88 approximately ½ mile east of the most westerly junction of Jackson Valley Road and Highway 88 in the lone area of Amador County (“County”). In 2013, GRI obtained approval of a Use Permit Amendment (UP-06; 9-2) and Reclamation Plan (RP-06-1) for an expansion of the Site from approximately 74 acres to approximately 159 acres, with reclamation to open space and grazing following the completion of mining (“2013 JVQ Expansion Project”). The 2013 JVQ Expansion Project underwent environmental review pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”). As Lead Agency, the County prepared and certified an Environmental Impact Report (herein referred to as the “2013 EIR”), adopted Findings of Fact, and adopted a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program¹.

1.2 Environmental Review

In accordance with CEQA, when a Lead Agency considers further discretionary approval on a previously approved project, the Lead Agency is required to consider if the previously certified CEQA document provides an adequate basis for rendering a decision on the proposed discretionary action. When making such a decision, the Lead Agency must consider any changes to the project or its circumstances that have occurred and any new information that has become available since the project’s CEQA document was certified.

In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Sections 15162–15164, prior to approving a further discretionary action, and depending on the situation, the Lead Agency must either: (1) prepare a Subsequent EIR; (2) prepare a Supplemental EIR; (3) prepare a Subsequent Negative Declaration; (4) prepare an Addendum to the EIR or Negative Declaration; or (5) prepare no further documentation. More specifically, State CEQA Guidelines Section 15162(a) states:

When an EIR has been certified or a negative declaration adopted for a project, no subsequent EIR shall be prepared for that project unless the lead agency determines, on the basis of substantial evidence in the light of the whole record, one or more of the following:

- 1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects;*
- 2) Substantial changes occur with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or*

¹ The 2013 JVQ Expansion Project was approved by the Amador County Planning Commission on June 11, 2013, and was upheld on appeal by the Amador County Board of Supervisors on July 30, 2013.

negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or

- 3) *New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any of the following:*
- A. The project will have one or more significant effects not discussed in the previous EIR or negative declaration;*
 - B. Significant effects previously examined will be substantially more severe than shown in the previous EIR;*
 - C. Mitigation measures or alternatives previously found not to be feasible would in fact be feasible and would substantially reduce one or more significant effects of the project, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative; or*
 - D. Mitigation measures or alternatives which are considerably different from those analyzed in the previous EIR would substantially reduce one or more significant effects on the environment, but the project proponents decline to adopt the mitigation measure or alternative.*

As demonstrated in Section 3.0, CEQA Evaluation, none of the conditions described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15162 calling for preparation of a subsequent EIR review have occurred. This Initial Study / Subsequent MND supports the conclusion that the proposed Project will not result in any new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects. In addition, as discussed below, there is no new information of substantial importance, new mitigation measures, or new alternatives that would substantially reduce significant impacts. As a result, this Initial Study / Subsequent MND is an appropriate CEQA document for analysis and consideration of the proposed Project.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project Title and Location

George Reed, Inc., Jackson Valley Quarry – Amendment to Use Permit (UP-06; 9-2) to Allow for Extended Hours of Operation.

2.2 Lead Agency Name and Address

Lead Agency Name:	County of Amador, Planning Department
Lead Agency Address:	810 Court Street, Jackson, CA 95642
Contact Person:	Chuck Beatty, Planning Director
Phone Number:	(209) 223-6380

2.3 Project Sponsor's Name and Address

Applicant:

Attn: Tom Ferrell
George Reed, Inc.
140 Empire Avenue
Modesto, CA 95354

Agent:

Attn: Jordan Main
Compass Land Group
3140 Peacekeeper Way, Suite 102
McClellan, CA 95652

2.4 Assessor Parcels, Ownership, Zoning, and General Plan Designations

The Project Site's current assessor parcel numbers, acreage, ownership, zoning and General Plan land use designations are as follows:

Current APN	Acreage	Ownership	Zoning	General Plan
005-230-018	159.66 ac.	The Reed Leasing Group, LLC ²	Special Use District (X)	Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) and Agricultural General (AG)

2.5 Description of Project

The JVQ Use Permit (UP-06; 9-2) currently restricts hours of operation to the following:

1. Site preparation activities: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday (COA 44.a)
2. Operational / reclamation activities (other than site preparation): 6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday (COA 15)
3. Maintenance and repair work: no restriction as long as activities do not exceed 45 dBA at the property line (COA 15)
4. Blasting: 11:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday (COA 16)

GRI proposes to modify Condition of Approval ("COA") #15 of the JVQ Use Permit to allow operational / reclamation activities (e.g., excavation, processing, load-out, and hauling) to occur during extended hours of operation (up to 24 hours per day) Monday through Friday ("Project"). No change to the approved hours of operation for site preparation activities or blasting are requested. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use.

Through modification of COA #15, GRI will be able to serve regional construction projects that now routinely occur at night and optimize work hours in response to market demands, which will provide environmental and ancillary benefits that further the County and State's goals related to reduced energy consumption, water use, worker health and safety, and transportation. For example, by operating at night, GRI will have flexibility to curtail energy consuming operations

² The Reed Leasing Group, LLC is an affiliate company of George Reed, Inc.

during periods of peak power demand and reduce the amount of water consumed for dust control. Worker health and safety conditions improve with lower ambient workplace temperatures (e.g., during early morning hours), reducing the risk of heat-related illnesses. Transportation of aggregate products at night and during off-peak hours reduces congestion during periods of peak travel and improves transportation safety.

2.6 Surrounding Land Uses and Setting

The Project Site consists of an active hard rock quarry mining operation. The Site is bounded by agricultural land use designations on all sides. Surrounding land uses include SR 88 and open space to the north and east, Jackson Valley Road and agricultural lands to the south, and agricultural lands and SR 88 to the west. (Reference 2013 EIR; §3.1.2, Setting)

2.7 Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required

GRI is not aware of any other applicable discretionary approvals required by other public agencies to carry out the Project.

3.0 CEQA EVALUATION

3.1 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The proposed Project will not have a significant effect on the environment, as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

<input type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality
<input type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Energy
<input type="checkbox"/> Geology and Soils	<input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions	<input type="checkbox"/> Hazards and Hazardous Materials
<input type="checkbox"/> Hydrology and Water Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Use and Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Noise	<input type="checkbox"/> Population and Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Services
<input type="checkbox"/> Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Tribal Cultural Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> Utilities and Service Systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Wildfire	<input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance

3.2 Evaluation of Environmental Impacts

The following checklist is taken from the Environmental Checklist Form presented in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. The checklist is used to describe the impacts of the proposed Project and identify project-specific mitigation measures, as appropriate: For this checklist, the following designations are used:

Potentially Significant Impact: An impact that could be significant, and for which no mitigation has been identified. If any potentially significant impacts are identified, an EIR must be prepared.

Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated: An impact that requires mitigation to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level.

Less-Than-Significant Impact: Any impact that would not be considered significant under CEQA relative to existing standards.

No Impact: The Project would not have any impact.

I. AESTHETICS. <i>Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:</i>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.	Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b.	Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c.	In nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d.	Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to aesthetics has occurred since the 2013 EIR (e.g., nearby receptors, scenic designations).

a-b. The 2013 EIR found that the 2013 JVQ Expansion Project would have a less than significant impact on scenic vistas and resources. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to scenic vistas and scenic resources. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. **No impact** would occur.

c. The 2013 EIR found that, despite reclamation, impacts to the existing visual character of the Site would be considered significant and unavoidable, and a mitigation measure was adopted to reduce potential impacts. The Project would continue to comply with the existing mitigation measure relating to aesthetics identified in the 2013 EIR:

3.11.2: Implementation of approved reclamation plan. Mine reclamation is required by the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA). SMARA requires mines to be reclaimed to a usable condition that is readily adaptable for a productive alternative land use that

creates no danger to public health or safety. SMARA also requires surface mining operators to obtain approved financial assurance for the reclamation of mined lands, so that the public would not bear the cost of reclaiming abandoned operations. The reclamation process would include revegetation of disturbed areas around the perimeter of the project site

The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to the existing visual character of the Site. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. **No impact** would occur.

d. The 2013 EIR found that the 2013 JVQ Expansion Project would have a less than significant impact due to light or glare. Area and task lighting is currently in-place at the Project site for safety purposes and to operate during periods of low visibility. The proposed Project, although consisting of the same equipment types, production levels, and mining footprint, will shift additional production activities to nighttime hours, requiring additional lighting within select operational areas. A Light Pollution Prevention Plan has been prepared to identify the location of existing and proposed lighting fixtures that will illuminate operational areas during extended hours of operation while minimizing off-site effects. In addition to the approximate ten existing light fixtures associated with the processing plant, it is anticipated that approximately four new lighting fixtures will be needed in the processing and load-out area. Consistent with existing practices, in locations where lighting does not exist or where stationary lighting is not feasible, industry-standard portable light towers will be employed. The locations of the portable light towers will vary as mining progresses throughout the site. The existing Use Permit addresses requirements for site lighting by stipulating that “*artificial illumination of any area within Quarry site shall be of a non-glare nature and shall be shielded to extent feasible to prevent glare from affecting neighboring parcels of land with direct line of site of the Quarry...*” (COA #23). Consistent with this requirement, existing and proposed lighting fixtures will be equipped with shields / hoods that concentrate illumination downward such that no direct lighting is cast offsite. Given setbacks from nearby public streets and residences, as well as the fact that mining will predominantly occur below grade, site lighting is not anticipated to affect neighboring parcels of land. In addition, the site’s rolling topography and perimeter vegetation will also provide natural screening from potential lighting impacts. **A less than significant impact** resulting from light or glare will occur.

II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES.

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepare the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (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))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to agriculture and forestry resources has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-e. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to agriculture and forestry resources. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. **No impact** would occur.

III. AIR QUALITY.

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to air quality has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-d. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to air quality. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. **No impact** would occur.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES. <i>Would the project:</i>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.	Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b.	Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c.	Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d.	Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e.	Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f.	Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to biological resources has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-f. The applicant commissioned an updated Biological Assessment (ELMT, 2021) in support of the proposed Project to determine whether extended hours of operation may impact biological resources at the Site. ELMT determined the following:

- No substantial changes to the vegetation communities at the Site have occurred since the 2013 EIR;
- No documented wildlife movement areas occur within the boundary of the Site;
- No special-status wildlife species were observed during the habitat assessment;
- The Site is not located within federally designated Critical Habitat; and
- No new wetlands or potentially jurisdictional features, beyond those previously mapped and permitted, were observed.

ELMT's analysis confirms that there has been no significant change in the biological setting at the Project site since the 2013 EIR, and that the Project's proposed change to approved hours of operation would have **no impact** with respect to riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities, wetlands or jurisdictional waters, wildlife movement, local ordinances, or adopted habitat conservation plans.

ELMT's analysis concludes that potential impacts to nocturnal wildlife species would be **less than significant** with implementation of the proposed Light Pollution Prevention Plan (GRI, 2021), proposed noise mitigation measures contained within the Project's updated noise assessment (Bollard, 2021), and continued implementation of the biological resources mitigation measures adopted in connection with the 2013 EIR:

3.6.1a: As a precautionary measure, a qualified plant biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey in the spring just prior to surface disturbance of each new area to be mined to ensure that Hoover's calycadenia (Calycadenia hooveri) and any other state or federal special-status plant species would not be affected by the proposed activities. If no sensitive plants are found, then no further action would be needed. If special-status plant species are found, the project proponent shall consult with USFWS and/or CDFW to provide minimization and avoidance measures commensurate with the standards provided in applicable USFWS and/or CDFW protocols for the affected species. Where project disturbance will impact special status plant species habitat and avoidance is impractical, offsite habitat shall be preserved at a 1:1 ratio unless a different ratio is authorized by USFWS and/or CDFW protocol and or site specific circumstances justify a different ratio. The preservation and avoidance measures shall include, at a minimum, appropriate buffer areas clearly marked during mining activities, monitoring by a qualified botanist, and the development and implementation of a replanting plan (collection of success) for any individuals of the species that cannot be avoided.

3.6.1b: To avoid and minimize impacts on tree-nesting raptors and other listed/protected (i.e., Migratory Bird Treaty Act) nesting birds the following measures will be implemented;

- *If feasible, conduct all tree and shrub removal and grading activities during the non-breeding season (generally from October through February).*

- *If grading and tree removal activities are scheduled to occur during the breeding season for tree-nesting raptors and other listed/protected nesting birds (generally from March through September), pre-construction surveys for tree-nesting raptors and other listed/protected nesting birds shall be conducted. The surveys shall be conducted by a qualified biologist in suitable nesting habitat within 1,000 feet of the disturbance area for tree nesting raptors and other nesting birds prior to project activities that will occur between March 15 and September 15 of any given year. If active nests are recorded within these buffers the project proponent shall consult with CDFW to determine and implement appropriate avoidance and mitigation measures. Measures may include, but are not limited to, buffers (typically 500 feet) and monitoring.*

3.6.2: Implement On- and Off-site Replacement of Oak Woodlands Habitat. Where avoidance is not feasible or practicable, the project applicant shall provide a combination of on-site and off-site blue oak tree replacement of the full function and value of the natural community at a per-tree ratio of no less than 1:1. On-site mitigation may not represent more than one-half of the required mitigation consistent with PRC 21083.4 (b) (2) (C). All trees and shrubs planted shall be purchased from a locally adapted genetic stock obtained within 50 miles and 1,000 feet in elevation of the project site. To help ensure habitat establishment and success, planting densities shall not exceed 450 trees for each acre planted. The maintenance and monitoring plan shall include cages for each seedling, identify a weed control schedule, and outline a watering regimen for the plantings. Mitigation shall commence within one year of the removal of trees due to project operations. Replacement plantings would occur as areas are affected by mining operations. The requirements to maintain trees for mitigation purposes terminates seven years after the replacement trees are planted (PRC 21083.4 (b)(2)(C)).

As an alternative to on- or direct offsite mitigation (implemented by the applicant), the project proponent may contribute funds to the Oak Woodlands Conservation Fund, as established under Fish and Game Code §1363(a), for the purpose of purchasing oak woodlands conservation easements, as specified under paragraph (1) of subdivision (d) of that section and the guidelines and criteria of the Wildlife Conservation Board.

3.6.3: Compensate for Loss of Potential Jurisdictional Wetland Features and Associated Riparian Habitat. To ensure that there is no net loss of wetland and associated riparian habitat and no significant impact to potential jurisdictional features, the project proponent shall compensate for impacted wetlands and associated riparian habitat at a ratio of no less than 1:1. Compensation shall take the form of wetland preservation or creation in accordance with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and CDFW mitigation requirements, as required under project permits. Preservation and creation may occur on-site (through a conservation agreement) or off-site (through purchasing credits at a Corps approved mitigation bank), or as otherwise permitted or required by governing agencies.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to cultural resources has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-c. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, will have **no impact** to cultural resources. The Project would not increase the area subject to disturbance or the depth of excavation relative to what was analyzed under the 2013 EIR. In addition, the Project would continue to comply with the existing mitigation measures relating to cultural resources identified in the 2013 EIR:

3.9.2: If paleontological, historic or prehistoric archaeological resources, such as chipped or ground stone, fossil bearing rock, large quantities of shell, historic debris, building foundations, or human bone, are inadvertently discovered during ground-disturbing activities, no further mining should be permitted within 100 feet of the find until the Amador County Technical Advisory Committee is notified, and a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find and prepare an avoidance, evaluation or mitigation plan if appropriate.

3.9.3: In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains on site anywhere within the project area, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of Amador County has been contacted, per Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. If the coroner determines that the human remains are of Native American origin, it is necessary to comply with state laws relating to the disposition of Native American burials, which fall within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission (Pub. Res. Code Sec. 5097). If any human remains are discovered or recognized in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there will be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until:

1. *The coroner of the county has been informed and has determined that no investigation of the cause of death is required; and*
2. *if the remains are of Native American origin,*
 - a. *The descendants of the deceased Native Americans have made a recommendation to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, or*
 - b. *The Native American Heritage Commission was unable to identify a descendant or the descendant failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission.*

VI. ENERGY. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to energy has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-b. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to energy. Instead, by operating at night, GRI will have flexibility to curtail energy consuming operations during periods of peak power demand, resulting in beneficial impacts to energy use. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. **No impact** would occur.

VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv. Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to geology and soils has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-b. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to geology and soils. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. Further, the Project would not increase the area subject to disturbance, slope angles, or the depth of excavation relative to what was analyzed under the 2013 EIR. **No impact** would occur.

In addition, the Project would continue to comply with the existing mitigation measures relating to geology and soils identified in the 2013 EIR:

3.7.2: A California registered Geotechnical Engineer shall inspect the quarry slopes on an annual basis during excavation (in addition to following major seismic events) to assess bedrock fracture and joint conditions. If it is proven that annual inspections are not necessary, inspections may be reduced with the Geotechnical Engineer's recommendation and County concurrence. The inspection shall require continued mapping and movement monitoring of the mining slopes to assess slope stability. If a slope condition presents risk to mine safety or the potential for erosion/siltation, repair measures shall be implemented. Engineering recommendations for slope repair or stabilization shall be incorporated into the proposed project.

3.9.2: If paleontological, historic or prehistoric archaeological resources, such as chipped or ground stone, fossil bearing rock, large quantities of shell, historic debris, building foundations, or human bone, are inadvertently discovered during ground-disturbing activities, no further mining should be permitted within 100 feet of the find until the Amador County Technical Advisory Committee is notified, and a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find and prepare an avoidance, evaluation or mitigation plan if appropriate.

VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project.

a-b. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. **No impact** would occur.

IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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, would the project result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to hazards or hazardous materials has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-d. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. **No impact** would occur.

In addition, the Project would continue to comply with the existing mitigation measures relating to hazards and hazardous materials identified in the 2013 EIR:

3.10.1: If contaminated soil and/or groundwater are encountered or suspected contamination is encountered during project construction, work shall be halted in the area, and the type and extent of the contamination shall be identified. A qualified professional, in consultation with the overseeing regulatory agency (RWQCB, DTSC, and/or ACEHD) shall then develop an appropriate method to remediate the contamination, and determine the appropriate handling and disposal method of any contaminated soil and/or groundwater. If required, a remediation plan shall be implemented in conjunction with continued project construction.

3.10.2: The project applicant will ensure, through the enforcement of contractual obligations, that all contractors transport, store, and handle construction related hazardous materials in a manner consistent with relevant regulations and guidelines, including those recommended and enforced by the California Department of Transportation, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, ACEHD, the Amador Fire Protection District, the Jackson Valley Fire Protection District, and as outlined in the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures Plan (SPCCP) and the HMMP prepared for the project site. The project applicant will also ensure that all contractors immediately control the source of any leak and immediately contain any spill utilizing appropriate spill containment and countermeasures as outlined in the SPCCP. If required by any regulatory agency, contaminated media shall be collected and disposed of at an offsite facility approved to accept such media. In addition, all precautions required by the CVRWQCB-issued NPDES construction activity storm water permits will be taken to ensure that no hazardous materials enter any nearby waterways.

X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY. <i>Would the project:</i>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.	Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b.	Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c.	Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern 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 result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i)	result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii)	substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite;	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d.	In flood hazard, tsunami, or seiche zones, risk release of pollutants due to project inundation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e.	Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to hydrology and water quality has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-d. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to hydrology and water quality. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. **No impact** would occur.

In addition, the Project would continue to comply with the existing mitigation measure relating to hydrology and water quality identified in the 2013 EIR:

3.10.2: The project applicant will ensure, through the enforcement of contractual obligations, that all contractors transport, store, and handle construction related hazardous materials in a manner consistent with relevant regulations and guidelines, including those recommended and enforced by the California Department of Transportation, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board, ACEHD, the Amador Fire Protection District, the Jackson Valley Fire Protection District, and as outlined in the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasures Plan (SPCCP) and the HMMP prepared for the project site. The project applicant will also ensure that all contractors immediately control the source of any leak and immediately contain any spill utilizing appropriate spill containment and countermeasures as outlined in the SPCCP. If required by any regulatory agency, contaminated media shall be collected and disposed of at an offsite facility approved to accept such media. In addition, all precautions required by the CVRWQCB-issued NPDES construction activity storm water permits will be taken to ensure that no hazardous materials enter any nearby waterways.

XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Cause a significant environmental impact due to a conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to land use and planning has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-b. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to land use and planning. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. No element of the proposed Project affects land use/planning considerations; the Project is consistent with the County's relevant land use plans. **No impact** would occur.

XII. MINERAL RESOURCES. <i>Would the project:</i>		Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a.	Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b.	Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to land use and planning has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-b. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to mineral resources. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. The Project would not change the maximum annual production level or otherwise impact the availability of mineral resources. **No impact** would occur.

XIII. NOISE. <i>Would the project result in:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to noise has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a. The applicant commissioned an updated Environmental Noise and Vibration Assessment (Bollard Acoustical Consultants, 2021) in support of the proposed Project to determine whether extended hours of operation may result in new or more severe impacts from noise from those analyzed in the 2013 EIR. Bollard conducted a detailed assessment to identify existing noise-sensitive land uses in the immediate project vicinity; quantify existing ambient noise and vibration levels in the immediate project vicinity; use CEQA guidelines and local Amador County noise standards to develop appropriate standards of significance for this project; predict project-related noise and vibration levels at the nearest sensitive receptor areas and to compare those levels against the applicable standards of significance; and where potentially significant project-related noise impacts are identified, to recommend and evaluate mitigation options that will reduce those impacts to a less than significant level.

Bollard's analysis reveals the following:

- Processing operations: average hourly and maximum noise levels from nighttime processing operations is predicted to be acceptable relative to the nighttime average noise standards applicable at each receptor. As a result, processing operations noise impacts are not considered significant.

- Excavation operations: worst-case (unshielded) excavation operations could exceed the project standards of significance by 2 to 9 dB during nighttime operations at the nearest receptors when those operations are occurring at the nearest locations to each receptor and at existing grade (prior to depressing into the pit).
- Hauling operations: noise levels from nighttime heavy truck trip generation is not predicted to exceed applicable noise standards. In addition, single-event noise levels generated by project heavy trucks on Jackson Valley Road during nighttime hours are not predicted to exceed criteria for sleep disturbance within the residences located adjacent to that roadway. As a result, off-site heavy truck traffic noise impacts are not considered significant so long as a maximum of 45 loads (90 one-way trips) in any nighttime hour and 385 loads (770 one-way trips) per night are observed.
- Cumulative operations (processing, excavation and hauling): unmitigated, combined noise levels from all three project components (i.e., processing, excavation and hauling) indicates the project would result in an exceedance of the project standards of significance at nearby noise-sensitive receptors during nighttime hours. However, implementation of proposed noise mitigation measures would provide sufficient noise attenuation to reduce combined noise generation from all three project components to a state of compliance with the applicable standards of significance.

To reduce potential impacts associated with noise to a state of compliance with the project thresholds of significance, the following noise mitigation measures are recommended:

Mitigation Measure N-1: Processing Plant Source Control

Suspend acoustic curtains around the processing plant crushers and screen decks (i.e., the loudest components of the processing plant).

Mitigation Measure N-2: Processing Plant Source Control

Ensure that all processing area conveyors are properly lubricated at all times.

Mitigation Measure N-3: Excavation Buffers

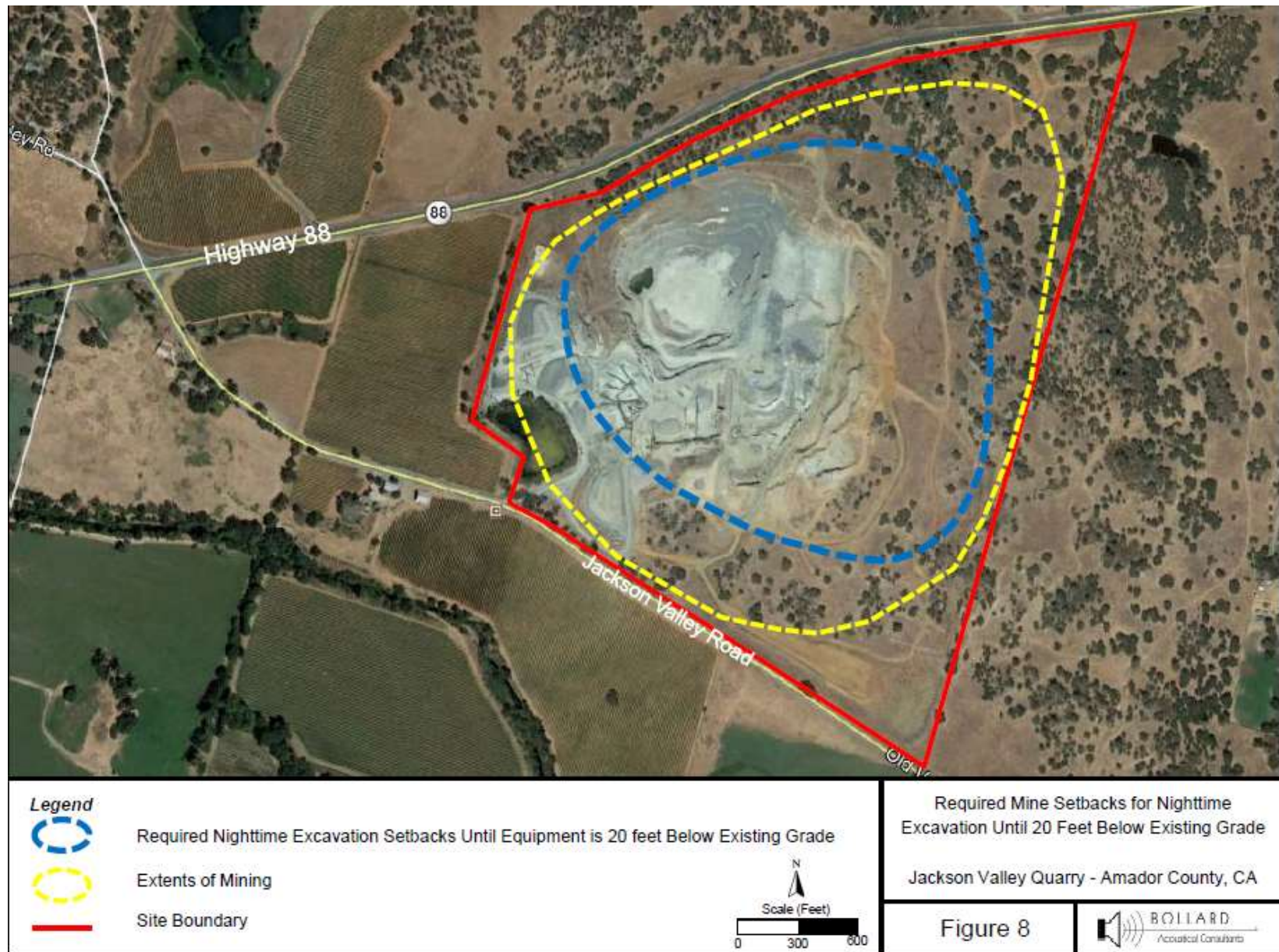
Limit excavation activities to the currently permitted hours of operation (6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.) until the excavation equipment has progressed sufficiently into the pit (i.e., 20 feet below existing grade) to be shielded by surrounding topography. Figure 8 from the Bollard report (shown below) identifies the locations where excavation activities should be limited to currently permitted hours of operation until that equipment is depressed at least 20 feet below existing grade.

Mitigation Measure N-4: Compliance Monitoring

Following implementation of N-1 through N-3, periodic noise monitoring shall be conducted to confirm effectiveness of the mitigation measures and compliance with the applicable noise standards. Noise monitoring shall be performed by a qualified consultant 3 months and 6 months from commencement of nighttime operations and shall occur while processing plant crushers are in operation.

Mitigation Measure N-5: Limited Nighttime Truck Loads

Limit the maximum number of nighttime truck loads to 45 (90 one-way trips) in any nighttime hour and 385 (770 one-way trips) per night (10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.) to ensure compliance with the County's 60 dB Ldn exterior noise standard.



Level of Significance After Mitigation:

Implementation of Mitigation Measures N-1 through N-5, in conjunction with the ongoing application of the current project conditions of approval which pertain to noise, would reduce potential impacts associated with noise to ***less than significant***.

In addition, the Project would continue to comply with the existing mitigation measures relating to noise identified in the 2013 EIR:

3.4.1a: In order to avoid noise-sensitive hours of the day and night, project applicant shall comply with the following:

- *Site preparation activities shall be limited to the daytime hours of 8 a.m. through 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.*

3.4.1b: To reduce daytime noise impacts due to mining operations, the applicant shall implement the following measures:

- *During mining operations, the project applicant shall outfit all equipment, fixed or mobile, with properly operating and maintained exhaust and intake mufflers, consistent with manufacturers' standards.*
- *Impact tools (e.g., jack hammers and rock drills) used for mining operations shall be hydraulically or electrically powered wherever possible to avoid noise associated with compressed air exhaust from pneumatically powered tools. Where use of pneumatic tools is unavoidable, an exhaust muffler on the compressed air exhaust shall be used. External jackets on the tools themselves shall be used where feasible. Quieter procedures, such as use of drills rather than impact tools, shall be used whenever feasible.*
- *Stationary noise sources shall be located as far from adjacent receptors as possible, and they shall be muffled and enclosed within temporary sheds, incorporate insulation barriers, or other measures to the extent feasible.*

3.4.1c: To further address the nuisance impact of site preparation activities, the project applicant shall implement the following:

- *Signs shall be posted at all site entrances to the property upon commencement of mining operations, for the purposes of informing all contractors/subcontractors, their employees, agents, material haulers, and all other persons at the applicable sites of the basic requirements of Mitigation Measures 3.4.1a through 3.4.1b.*
- *Signs shall be posted at the project site that include permitted operation days and hours, a day and evening contact number for the job site, and a contact number in the event of problems.*

- *An onsite complaint and enforcement manager shall respond to and track complaints and questions related to noise.*

3.4.2: The applicant shall construct an approximately 7 foot high earthen berm, which can be developed from overburden or aggregate material and which shall be landscaped for erosion control and will remain in place during the life of the project. The berm shall be placed along a portion of the northern edge of the project site that will block the line of sight from the nearest residence to the north to the noise sources of mining activities.

b. The applicant commissioned an updated Environmental Noise and Vibration Assessment (Bollard Acoustical Consultants, 2021) in support of the proposed Project to determine whether extended hours of operation may result in new or more severe impacts from groundborne vibration from those analyzed in the 2013 EIR. Bollard determined the vibration generated during extended hours of operation would be similar to that which currently occurs during daytime hours. This is because no changes in overall plant equipment, production or heavy truck trip generation are proposed as part of the project. Rather, the proposed project would allow shifting of production, processing and load-out to nighttime hours when desired, but no increases in production are proposed. Blasting would continue to occur during daytime hours pursuant to the current use permit requirements, so no nighttime blasting operations would result from this project. Because existing and project-generated vibration levels are well below those thresholds, no vibration-related impacts are identified for the Project. **No impact** would occur.

c. The Project site is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or within two miles of a public airport. **No impact** would occur.

XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to population and housing has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-b. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to population and housing. The Project would not include construction of new housing or any development that would draw people to the area nor displace existing people or housing. **No impact** would occur.

XV. PUBLIC SERVICES. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provisions of 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 public services:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Fire protection	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other Public Facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to public services has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-b. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to public services. The Project would not require the construction of new public service facilities (e.g., fire protection, police protection, school, parks, other public facilities), and would not affect existing public service facilities. **No impact** would occur.

In addition, the Project would continue to comply with the existing mitigation measures relating to public services identified in the 2013 EIR:

3.8.1a: The project applicant will ensure, through the enforcement of contractual obligations that during construction, staging areas, welding areas, or areas slated for development using spark-producing equipment shall be cleared of dried vegetation or other materials that could serve as fire fuel. The contractor shall keep these areas clear of combustible materials in order

to maintain a firebreak. Any construction and mining equipment that normally includes a spark arrester shall be equipped with an arrester in good working order. This includes, but is not limited to, vehicles and heavy equipment.

3.8.1b: The project applicant shall, in consultation with the Jackson Valley Fire Protection District (JVFPD), create fire-safe landscaping near the structures and develop a plan for emergency response and evacuation at the project site.

XVI. RECREATION.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to recreation has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-b. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to recreation. The Project would not result in an increased use of existing recreational facilities and would not involve the expansion of recreational facilities. **No impact** would occur.

XVII. TRANSPORTATION <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Conflict with program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Substantially increase hazards due to a geometric design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to transportation has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-d. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to transportation. Instead, by operating at night, GRI will have flexibility to shift existing approved levels of traffic to a longer operational period (up to 24 hours per day), resulting in a beneficial impact to transportation. Transportation of aggregate products at night and during off-peak hours reduces congestion during periods of peak travel and improves transportation safety. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, total number of truck trips, trucking routes, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use. **No impact** would occur.

In addition, the Project would continue to comply with the existing mitigation measures relating to transportation identified in the 2013 EIR:

3.2.3a: Widen the westbound SR 12 approach at the intersection of SR 88 / SR 12 to provide a separate 100-foot-long right-turn lane, and modify the signal to provide overlap phasing for southbound right turns during the protected eastbound left-turn phase.

3.2.3b: Install traffic signals, and associated geometric improvements (such as deceleration and turning lanes), at the intersection of State Route 88 at Jackson Valley Road [West]].

3.2.3c: Install traffic signals at the intersection of SR 88 and Buena Vista Road.

3.2.3d: Install traffic signals at the intersection of SR 88 and SR 104 – Jackson Valley Road (East).

3.2.5: Construct an eastbound right-turn lane at the intersection of SR 88 and Jackson Valley Road [West] (#2), in accordance with Caltrans standards (for deceleration lane length and storage length).

3.2.6a: Reconstruct Jackson Valley Road (West) from the quarry access northwest to SR 88, in accordance with Amador County standards.

3.2.6b: The quarry operator shall enter into a new long-term maintenance agreement with Amador County to maintain Jackson Valley Road (West) between the quarry access and SR 88.

XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code 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:				
i) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) 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 Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to tribal cultural resources has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-c. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, will have **no impact** to tribal cultural resources. The Project would not increase the area subject to disturbance or the depth of excavation relative to what was analyzed under the 2013 EIR. In addition, the Project would continue to comply with the existing mitigation measures relating to cultural resources identified in the 2013 EIR:

3.9.2: If paleontological, historic or prehistoric archaeological resources, such as chipped or ground stone, fossil bearing rock, large quantities of shell, historic debris, building foundations, or human bone, are inadvertently discovered during ground-disturbing activities, no further mining should be permitted within 100 feet of the find until the Amador County Technical Advisory Committee is notified, and a qualified archaeologist can assess the

significance of the find and prepare an avoidance, evaluation or mitigation plan if appropriate.

3.9.3: In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains on site anywhere within the project area, there shall be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent remains until the coroner of Amador County has been contacted, per Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. If the coroner determines that the human remains are of Native American origin, it is necessary to comply with state laws relating to the disposition of Native American burials, which fall within the jurisdiction of the Native American Heritage Commission (Pub. Res. Code Sec. 5097). If any human remains are discovered or recognized in any location other than a dedicated cemetery, there will be no further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until:

- 1. The coroner of the county has been informed and has determined that no investigation of the cause of death is required; and*
- 2. if the remains are of Native American origin,*
 - a. The descendants of the deceased Native Americans have made a recommendation to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work, for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods as provided in Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, or*

The Native American Heritage Commission was unable to identify a descendant or the descendant failed to make a recommendation within 24 hours after being notified by the commission.

XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS. <i>Would the project:</i>	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water, wastewater treatment or storm water drainage, electric power, natural gas, or telecommunication facilities, the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry, and multiple dry years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c. Result in a determination by the waste water 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Generate solid waste in excess of state or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructures, or otherwise impair the attainment of solid waste reduction goals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to utilities and service systems has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-b. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to utilities and service systems. As previously stated, by operating at night, GRI will have flexibility to curtail energy consuming operations during periods of peak power demand, resulting in beneficial impacts to energy use. No new water facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, or stormwater drainage facilities would be required to support the Project. **No impact** would occur.

XX. WILDFIRE.

If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project:

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project. No significant change to the environmental setting in relation to wildfire has occurred since the 2013 EIR.

a-b. The proposed Project, involving only a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities, would result in no new or different impacts related to wildfires. The Project would not exacerbate wildfire risks or impair emergency response or evacuation plans. **No impact** would occur.

In addition, the Project would continue to comply with the existing mitigation measures relating to wildfires³ identified in the 2013 EIR:

3.8.1a: The project applicant will ensure, through the enforcement of contractual obligations that during construction, staging areas, welding areas, or areas slated for development using spark-producing equipment shall be cleared of dried vegetation or other materials that could serve as fire fuel. The contractor shall keep these areas clear of combustible materials in order

³ Wildfires was not a specific Appendix G checklist item at the time of the 2013 EIR; however, wildfire related mitigation measures were adopted in connection with the analysis related to public services.

to maintain a firebreak. Any construction and mining equipment that normally includes a spark arrester shall be equipped with an arrester in good working order. This includes, but is not limited to, vehicles and heavy equipment.

3.8.1b: The project applicant shall, in consultation with the Jackson Valley Fire Protection District (JVFPD), create fire-safe landscaping near the structures and develop a plan for emergency response and evacuation at the project site.

XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE.	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a. Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion

This Initial Study hereby incorporates by reference the prior 2013 EIR and focuses solely on the potential environmental impacts of the proposed Project.

a-c. The proposed Project involves a change to the approved hours of operation for operational / reclamation activities at an existing mining site. The Project will not modify the existing production levels, materials to be mined, area of disturbance, equipment types or mining methods, or otherwise expand or intensify the existing use.

An updated noise and vibration assessment was conducted for the proposed Project to evaluate potential impacts to nearby receptors and compliance with current Amador County noise standards during extended hours of operation. The noise and vibration assessment evaluated unmitigated (worst-case) conditions, then determined appropriate mitigation measures to ensure that the extended hours of operations do not adversely affect sensitive receptors located in the Project vicinity. No adverse vibration impacts were identified for the proposed Project; however, the updated noise assessment concludes that, without mitigation, noise generated during nighttime excavation, processing, load-out, and hauling could exceed acceptable noise levels at certain discrete receptors in the Project vicinity. Accordingly, site-specific noise

mitigation measures were developed by the noise consultant that include mining setbacks, processing area source noise control, and limitations on the number of nighttime truck trips. With implementation of the proposed noise control mitigation measures, the analysis concludes that impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels. An adaptive management program consisting of periodic noise monitoring following implementation of the noise mitigation measures would be conducted to confirm effectiveness of the mitigation measures and compliance with applicable noise standards.

A Light Pollution Prevention Plan has been prepared to identify the location of existing and proposed lighting fixtures that will illuminate operational areas during extended hours of operation while minimizing off-site effects. Given setbacks from nearby public streets and residences, as well as the fact that mining will predominantly occur below grade, site lighting is not anticipated to affect neighboring parcels of land. In addition, the site's rolling topography and perimeter vegetation will also provide natural screening from potential lighting impacts.

An updated biological resources and jurisdictional waters assessment was conducted for the proposed Project to evaluate whether there have been any changes to the biological setting since the prior environmental review, and whether the proposed Project may impact nocturnal wildlife species as a result of extended operating hours. The updated biological assessment determined that there have been no significant changes in the biological setting at the Project site since the 2013 EIR was prepared and that no new jurisdictional features, beyond those previously mapped and permitted, are present. Further, the updated biological assessment concludes that with implementation of the Light Pollution Prevention Plan and adherence to existing and proposed noise mitigation measures, potential impacts to nocturnal wildlife species associated with extended hours of operation will be less than significant.

In addition, the Project would continue to comply with all applicable existing mitigation measures relating identified in the 2013 EIR.

On the basis of the evaluation contained in this document, the proposed Project would have **less than significant impacts** to the overall quality of the environment and on human beings, and would not be cumulatively considerable.