

## **NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION**

The project listed below was reviewed for environmental impact by the Placer County Environmental Review Committee and was determined to have no significant effect upon the environment. A proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared for this project and has been filed with the County Clerk's office.

**PROJECT:** Robinson Newcastle Gravel Pit Conditional Use Permit Modification and 2020 Renewal (PLN20-00016)

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** Modification to Conditional Use Permit in order to expand the mining area by 4.2 acres, and extend the operation life of the mining pit for an additional 20 years.

**PROJECT LOCATION:** 9601 Ophir Road, 200 yards west of the intersection of Ophir Road and Lozanos Road in the Newcastle area, Placer County

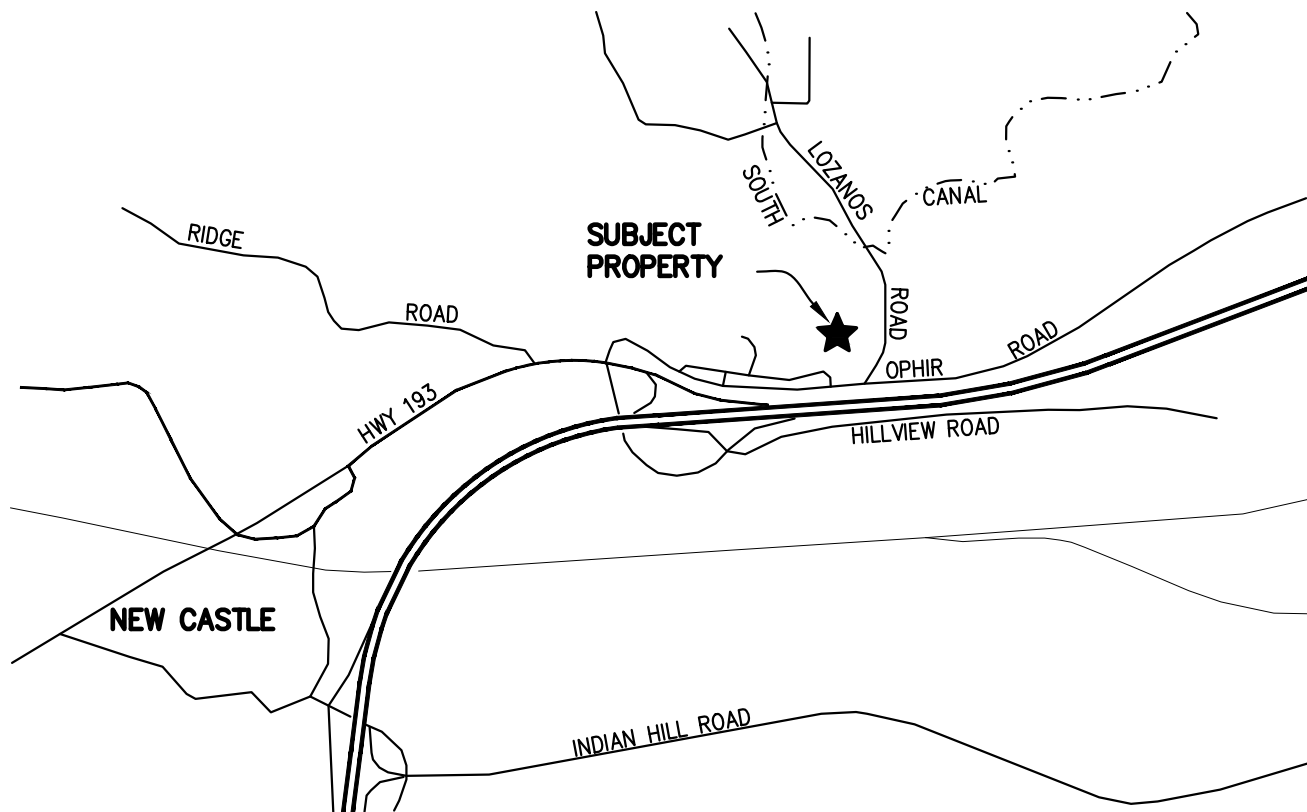
**APPLICANT:** Robinson Sand and Gravel / Jan Ferreira

The comment period for this document closes on October 6, 2021. A copy of the Mitigated Negative Declaration is available for public review at the County's web site:

<https://www.placer.ca.gov/2826/Negative-Declarations>

A copy of the Mitigated Negative Declaration is available for public review at the Community Development Resource Agency public counter, and at the Newcastle and Auburn Public Libraries. Property owners within 300 feet of the subject site shall be notified by mail of the upcoming hearing before the Planning Commission. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Environmental Coordination Services, at (530)745-3132, between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. Comments may be sent to [cdraecs@placer.ca.gov](mailto:cdraecs@placer.ca.gov) or 3091 County Center Drive, Suite 190, Auburn, CA 95603.

Delivered to 300' Property Owners on September 7, 2021



**VICINITY MAP**  
NTS

## MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

In accordance with Placer County ordinances regarding implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act, Placer County has conducted an Initial Study to determine whether the following project may have a significant adverse effect on the environment, and on the basis of that study hereby finds:

- ☐ The proposed project will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment; therefore, it does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report and this **Negative Declaration** has been prepared.
- ☒ Although the proposed project could have a significant adverse effect on the environment, there will not be a significant adverse effect in this case because the project has incorporated specific provisions to reduce impacts to a less than significant level and/or the mitigation measures described herein have been added to the project. A **Mitigated Negative Declaration** has thus been prepared.

The environmental documents, which constitute the Initial Study and provide the basis and reasons for this determination are attached and/or referenced herein and are hereby made a part of this document.

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Title: Robinson Newcastle Gravel Pit Conditional Use Permit Modification and 2020 Renewal	Project # PLN20-00016
Description: Modification to Conditional Use Permit in order to expand the mining area by 4.2 acres, and extend the operation life of the mining pit for an additional 20 years.	
Location: 9601 Ophir Road, 200 yards west of the intersection of Ophir Road and Lozanos Road in the Newcastle area, Placer County.	
Project Owner: Ophir Road Industrial Park, LLC	
Project Applicant: Robinson Sand and Gravel / Jan Ferreira	
County Contact Person: Shirlee I. Herrington	530-745-3132

### PUBLIC NOTICE

The comment period for this document closes on **October 6, 2021**. A copy of the Mitigated Negative Declaration is available for public review at the County's web site (<https://www.placer.ca.gov/2826/Negative-Declarations>), Community Development Resource Agency public counter, and at the Penryn Public Library. Property owners within 300 feet of the subject site shall be notified by mail of the upcoming meeting before the **Planning Commission**. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the Environmental Coordination Services, at (530)745-3132 between the hours of 8:00 am and 5:00 pm at 3091 County Center Drive, Auburn, CA 95603.

If you wish to appeal the appropriateness or adequacy of this document, address your written comments to our finding that the project will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment: (1) identify the environmental effect(s), why they would occur, and why they would be significant, and (2) suggest any mitigation measures which you believe would eliminate or reduce the effect to an acceptable level. Regarding item (1) above, explain the basis for your comments and submit any supporting data or references. Refer to Section 18.32 of the Placer County Code for important information regarding the timely filing of appeals.



## INITIAL STUDY & CHECKLIST

This Initial Study has been prepared to identify and assess the anticipated environmental impacts of the following described project application. The document may rely on previous environmental documents (see Section D) and site-specific studies (see Section J) prepared to address in detail the effects or impacts associated with the project.

This document has been prepared to satisfy the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 CCR 15000 et seq.). CEQA requires that all state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before acting on those projects.

The Initial Study is a public document used by the decision-making lead agency to determine whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment. If the lead agency finds substantial evidence that any aspect of the project, either individually or cumulatively, may have a significant effect on the environment, regardless of whether the overall effect of the project is adverse or beneficial, the lead agency is required to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), use a previously-prepared EIR and supplement that EIR, or prepare a Subsequent EIR to analyze the project at hand. If the agency finds no substantial evidence that the project or any of its aspects may cause a significant effect on the environment, a Negative Declaration shall be prepared. If in the course of analysis, the agency recognizes that the project may have a significant impact on the environment, but that by incorporating specific mitigation measures the impact will be reduced to a less than significant effect, a Mitigated Negative Declaration shall be prepared.

Project Title: Robinson Newcastle Gravel Pit Conditional Use Permit Modification and 2020 Renewal	Project # PLN20-00016
Entitlement(s): Conditional Use Permit Modification	
Site Area: 19.5 acres	APN: 040-320-057-000
Location: 9601 Ophir Road, 200 yards west of the intersection of Ophir Road and Lozanos Road in the Newcastle area, Placer County.	

### A. BACKGROUND:

#### Project Description:

The project proposes to extend the operational life of the Robinson Newcastle Gravel Pit for an additional 20 years in order to expand and complete aggregate mining of the site as well as complete reclamation. The project site has been used as an aggregate mine since 1976. The existing mine is operating under Conditional Use Permit (CUP) PCPM201000005 which was most recently extended in 2010 and expired in January 2020. To date, the mining operations have removed 1,126,000 cubic yards of material. The proposed project includes a modification to the approved CUP to expand the mining area by 4.2 acres, allowing an estimated additional 210,000 cubic yards to be removed from the site. The operational life of the mine would extend from January 2020 to January 2041.

Mining in the proposed expansion area would be completed in four phases over 20 years. Mine operations expect to extract approximately 10,500 cubic yards annually, but no more than 16,000 cubic yards would be removed in any single year. The material to be removed would include decomposed granite, top soil, and boulders. Extracted materials are typically sold for walkways/trails and landscaping, pipe bedding and shading material, and as rip-rap for erosion control/slope stabilization.

The preliminary Grading Plan depicts the gravel pit wall / berm with a maximum finished cut slope of 2:1. The elevation at the lowest point of the cut would be 1,006 feet and the elevation at its highest point would be 1,056 feet. Equipment that would be used in the proposed expanded mining area includes equipment that is currently used for existing

mining operations, including the existing sorting plant/conveyer system, loader, dozer, excavator, backhoe, water truck and haul trucks. The proposed hours of operation would be unchanged from the current hours of operation, which are limited to 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. during the winter months, and 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. during the summer months. In addition, staffing levels remain the same and no additional on-site parking is proposed.

Access to the site is via Ophir Road. Access and haul routes to and from the site would not change from those used for existing operations. Maintenance would be ongoing on the existing access road as it currently is with existing mining operations. Access road maintenance includes minor grading to smooth the roadway surface. No new access road or expansion of the existing access road is included in the proposed project. Equipment and materials storage areas would be contained within the mine floor area of the project site, consistent with current operations. The stockpiles onsite would vary in size depending on excavation quantities and shipping demands.

Haul trucks exit the site onto Ophir Road. Long distance hauls generally travel west to the intersection of State Route 193 and the I-80 interchange. Short distance, local hauls generally begin along Lozanos Road, Ophir Road and Wise Road and disperse from there. Truck trips and haul routes are expected to be the same as the existing operations.

**Project Site** (Background/Existing Setting):

The project site is approximately 19.5 acres and is zoned Farm, combining Mineral Reserve, combining Special Purpose (F-MR-SP) and Highway Service, combining building site size of 43,000 square feet, combining Mineral Reserve, combining Special Purpose, combining Design scenic corridor (HS-B-43-MR-SP-Dc). The site is located within the Ophir General Plan (1983). The Ophir General Plan identifies the project site and surrounding areas as the Ophir Industrial Park.

The site is bound to the south by Ophir Road and a park-and-ride parking lot, as well as Interstate 80; land north, west and east of the site is undeveloped. Commercial and light industrial land uses occur farther east of the site across Lozanos Road. Approximately 320 feet to the north of the property is a single-family residence. A Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) canal runs along the northern boundary of the site.

The site has operated under a series of Conditional Use Permits since 1977. The existing site includes the current mining operations, ruderal areas, blue oak woodland along the eastern portion of the site outside the actively mined area and remaining areas including along the southern slope consist of non-native annual grassland (Figure 1).



Figure 1. Project Location Map

### B. Environmental Setting:

Location	Zoning	General Plan/Community Plan Designations	Existing Conditions and Improvements
Site	Farm, combining Mineral Reserve, combining Special Purpose (F-MR-SP); and Highway Service, combining building site size of 43,000 square feet, combining Mineral Reserve, combining Special Purpose, combining Design scenic corridor (HS-B-43-MR-SP-Dc)	Rural Estate 4.6 – 10 Acre Minimum and Commercial	Existing Surface Mine, Robinson Newcastle Gravel Pit
North	Farm, combining Special Purpose, combining building site 4.6 Acre Minimum (F-SP 4.6 Ac. Min.); and Farm, combining Mineral Reserve, combining Special Purpose (F-MR-SP)	Rural Estate 4.6 – 10 Acre Minimum	Developed and undeveloped rural farm properties
South	Highway Service, combining building site size of 43,000 square feet, combining Special Purpose, combining Design scenic corridor (HS-B-43-SP-Dc); Highway Service, combining building site size of 43,000 square feet, combining Mineral Reserve, combining Special Purpose, combining Design scenic corridor (HS-B-43-MR-SP-Dc); and Industrial, combining Design scenic corridor (IN-Dc)	Commercial and Business Park/Industrial 10,000 square feet – 5 Acre Minimum.	Ophir Road and Interstate 80

East	Farm, combining Mineral Reserve, combining Special Purpose (F-MR-SP); and Industrial, combining Design scenic corridor, combining Mineral Reserve, combining Special Purpose (IN-Dc-MR-SP)	Rural Residential 2.3 – 4.6 Acre Minimum and Industrial	Undeveloped rural farm properties and undeveloped industrial properties
West	Farm, combining Special Purpose, combining building site 4.6 acres (F-SP-4.6 acres)	Rural Residential 1 – 10 Acre Minimum	Undeveloped rural farm properties

**C. NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES:** Have California Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with the project area requested consultation pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1? If so, is there a plan for consultation that includes, for example, the determination of significance of impacts to tribal cultural resources, procedures regarding confidentiality, etc.?

*Pursuant to Assembly Bill 52, on June 9, 2020, invitations to consult were sent to tribes who requested notification of proposed projects within this geographic area. A request to consult was received from the United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC). Consultation closed on June 25, 2020, with the inclusion of mitigation measures for Inadvertent Discoveries.*

**NOTE:** Conducting consultation early in the CEQA process allows tribal governments, lead agencies, and project proponents to discuss the level of environmental review, identify and address potential adverse impacts to tribal cultural resources, and reduce the potential for delay and conflict in the environmental review process. (See Public Resources Code section 21080.3.2.) Information may also be available from the California Native American Heritage Commission's Sacred Lands File per Public Resources Code section 5097.96 and the California Historical Resources Information System administered by the California Office of Historic Preservation. Please also note that Public Resources Code section 21082.3(c) contains provisions specific to confidentiality.

#### **D. PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENT:**

The County has determined that an Initial Study shall be prepared in order to determine whether the potential exists for unmitigable impacts resulting from the proposed project. Relevant analysis from the County-wide General Plan and Community Plan Certified EIRs, and other project-specific studies and reports that have been generated to date, were used as the database for the Initial Study. The decision to prepare the Initial Study utilizing the analysis contained in the General Plan and Specific Plan Certified EIRs, and project-specific analysis summarized herein, is sustained by Sections 15168 and 15183 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Section 15168 relating to Program EIRs indicates that where subsequent activities involve site-specific operations, the agency would use a written checklist or similar device to document the evaluation of the site and the activity, to determine whether the environmental effects of the operation were covered in the earlier Program EIR. A Program EIR is intended to provide the basis in an Initial Study for determining whether the later activity may have any significant effects. It will also be incorporated by reference to address regional influences, secondary effects, cumulative impacts, broad alternatives, and other factors that apply to the program as a whole.

The following documents serve as Program-level EIRs from which incorporation by reference will occur:

- ➔ Placer County General Plan EIR
- ➔ Ophir Community Plan EIR

#### **E. EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:**

The Initial Study checklist recommended by the State of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines is used to determine potential impacts of the proposed project on the physical environment. The checklist provides a list of questions concerning a comprehensive array of environmental issue areas potentially affected by the project (see CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G). Explanations to answers are provided in a discussion for each section of questions as follows:

- a) A brief explanation is required for all answers including "No Impact" answers.

- b) "Less Than Significant Impact" applies where the project's impacts are insubstantial and do not require any mitigation to reduce impacts.
- c) "Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less than Significant Impact." The County, as lead agency, must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less-than-significant level (mitigation measures from earlier analyses may be cross-referenced).
- d) "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- e) All answers must take account of the entire action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts [CEQA Guidelines, Section 15063(a)(1)].
- f) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, Program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration [CEQA Guidelines, Section 15063(c)(3)(D)]. A brief discussion should be attached addressing the following:
  - ➔ **Earlier analyses used** – Identify earlier analyses and state where they are available for review.
  - ➔ **Impacts adequately addressed** – Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of, and adequately analyzed in, an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards. Also, state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
  - ➔ **Mitigation measures** – For effects that are checked as "Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures," describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- g) References to information sources for potential impacts (i.e. General Plans/Community Plans, zoning ordinances) should be incorporated into the checklist. Reference to a previously-prepared or outside document should include a reference to the pages or chapters where the statement is substantiated. A source list should be attached and other sources used, or individuals contacted, should be cited in the discussion.

**I. AESTHETICS** – Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the project:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? (PLN)			X	
2. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings, within a state scenic highway? (PLN)			X	
3. In non-urbanized 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? (PLN)			X	
4. Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? (PLN)			X	

**Discussion Item I-1, 2, 3, 4:**

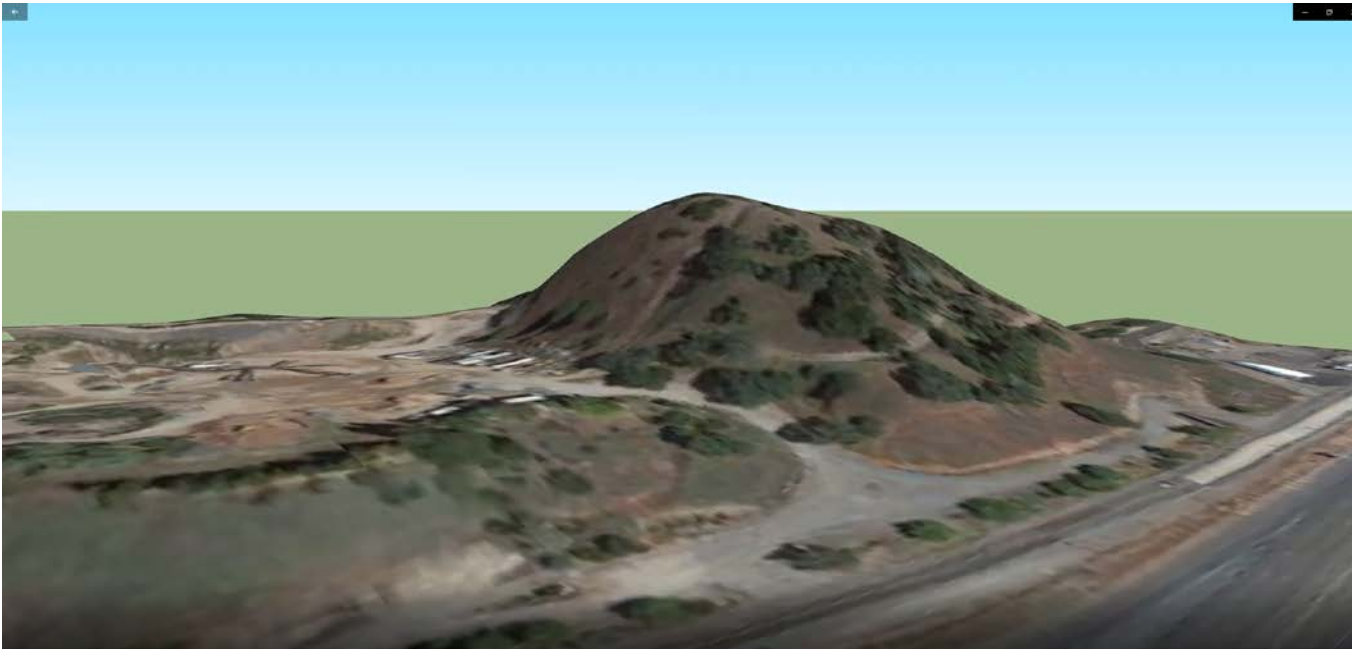
Aesthetics generally refers to visual resources and the quality of what can be seen, or overall visual perception of the environment, and may include such characteristics as building height and mass, development density and design, building condition (i.e., blight), ambient lighting and illumination, landscaping, and open space. Views refer to visual access and obstruction of prominent visual features, including both specific visual landmarks and panoramic vistas. Lighting issues address the effects of nighttime illumination and daytime glare on adjacent land uses.

The subject property is not located within a state scenic highway however, the Ophir General Plan designates Interstate 80 as a scenic route. The mine site is situated on a low-lying ridgeline with an elevation up to approximately 1,100 feet, which is approximately 100 to 200 feet above the immediately surrounding lower-lying areas. The site entrance is moderately visible from the I-80 right-of-way however all earthwork and other mining operations are shielded from public vantage points. A row of evergreen trees planted along the southerly perimeter of the pit floor screens the majority of the mining operations from view while topographical obstructions and elevation difference between the mine and I-80 also conceal the mine operations from view. The mining operations cannot be seen from properties located to the north, east, or west which are owned by the mine operator.

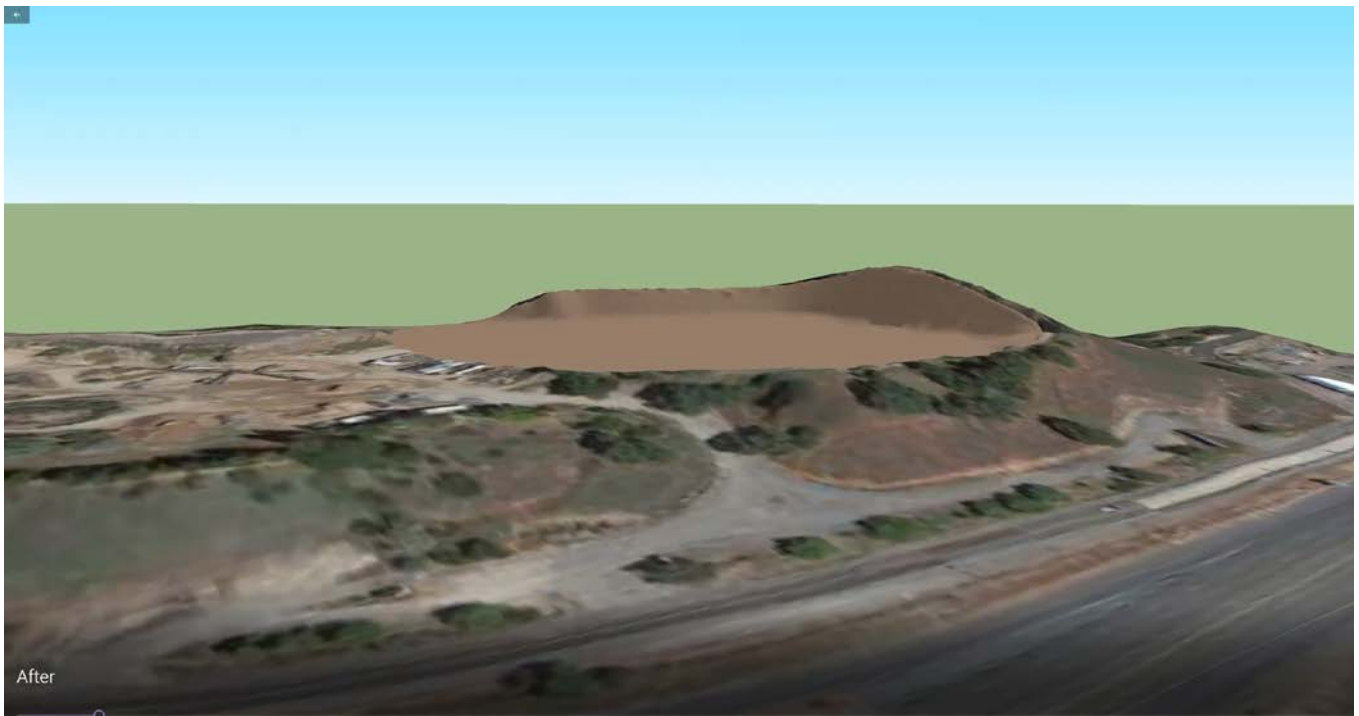
Mining activities conducted over the last 45 years have excavated material from the central portion of the site (the ridgeline area) leaving the surrounding hillsides as a berm or “shell” around the mine for the purposes of containing drainage onsite which also screens mining activities from view from the surrounding areas at lower elevations, including I-80, industrial development areas, and residential areas at a greater distance from the site. Except for the existing mine access road, the exterior hillsides that comprise the “shell” surrounding the active mine floor remain largely unmodified and appear as undeveloped oak woodland interspersed with grassland as viewed from the surrounding lower elevation areas. In the existing condition, several residences located approximately 0.25-mile south of the mine off of Chantry Hill Road (south of I-80) and at a similar elevation to the mine have at least partial views into the active mine floor. Similarly, the mine may be partially visible from some rural residential areas at higher elevations in the Bald Hill Road area and areas north of Wise Road north-northwest of the mine site. However, views to the mine from these areas would be from a distance of over 1.25 miles and the mine would not be the primary visual feature in views from these areas. Additionally, views to the mine from these areas are somewhat obstructed by intervening vegetation and topography and the primary views are long-distance views to the Sacramento Valley, Coast Range, and Sutter Buttes. Tree removal in the expansion area will occur in five phases, each phase lasting approximately four years [i.e., Phase 1 Year 0-4, Phase 2 Year 5-8, Phase 3 Year 9-12, Phase 4 Year 13-16, Phase 5 Year 17-20] as shown in Figure 2, above. Staff has determined that impacts to private parcel views will be minimal given the site distance and expansive views from said parcels as well as the incremental duration of extraction over the next 20 years. Further, generally speaking, views from private parcels are not protected under CEQA.

The proposed CUP modification would allow for additional materials extraction at the eastern extent of the existing mine pit and, consistent with past operations since 1976, would leave the hillside “shell” on the exterior of the proposed expanded mining area intact to maintain existing visual screening of mining activities as viewed from lower elevations and areas north-northeast of the mine, including I-80 and residential areas at higher elevations. The

applicant prepared a grading simulation video which shows an aerial position of how excavation would occur from the existing mine floor and would leave the exterior hillside intact. Below are various still views from the aerial simulation video.



**Figure 3a - Aerial View looking Northeast Before Proposed Mine Expansion (Existing)**



**Figure 3b - Aerial View looking Northeast After Proposed Mine Expansion (Post Mining)**



**Figure 4a - Aerial View looking West Before Proposed Mine Expansion (Existing)**



**Figure 4b - Aerial View looking West After Proposed Mine Expansion (Post Mining)**



**Figure 5a - Aerial View looking West Before Proposed Mine Expansion (Existing)**



**Figure 5b - Aerial View looking West Before Proposed Mine Expansion (Post Mining)**

The proposed expansion is not expected to result in a substantial change in distant views of the site from areas to the north and northeast since the expanded mine face would be screened from view by the existing exterior hillside and vegetation. A slight reduction in the overall height of the hillside would not result in a substantial change in the distant views experienced from these areas since views from this direction would be of a vegetated hillside rather than the active cut of the excavation area and any reduction in the height of the existing hillside would occur incrementally over a 20-year period. Residences south of I-80 with existing views into the active mine area would have at least partial views to the expanded mine area. However, the expanded area would be a continuation of and similar to activities that have occurred at the mine over the past 45 years and the expansion would not change the existing visual character or quality of the area as currently experienced from residential areas south of I-80. No additional lighting beyond what currently exists at the site is proposed. Therefore, the proposed expansion is not expected to have a substantial effect on views from any publicly accessible vantage point in the area nor result in an adverse change in the visual quality or character of the project area.

No mitigation measures are required.

## II. AGRICULTURAL & FOREST RESOURCES – Would the project:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. 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? (PLN)				X
2. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, a Williamson Act contract or a Right-to-Farm Policy? (PLN)				X
3. 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))? (PLN)				X
4. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? (PLN)				X
5. 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? (PLN)				X
6. Conflict with General Plan or other policies regarding land use buffers for agricultural operations? (PLN)				X

### Discussion Item II-1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6:

The subject property is not designated Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance as shown on the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program Maps. The property is not within or adjacent to a Williamson Act contract, nor are there forest lands within the vicinity of the project site. Therefore, there is no impact.

## III. AIR QUALITY – Would the project:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? (AQ)		X		

2. 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? (AQ)		X		
3. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? (AQ)			X	
4. Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors adversely affecting a substantial number of people? (AQ)			X	

**Discussion Item III-1, 2:**

The proposed project is located within the Sacramento Valley Air Basin (SVAB) portion of Placer County and is under the jurisdiction of the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD). The SVAB is designated non-attainment for the federal and state ozone standards (ROG and NO<sub>x</sub>), and nonattainment for the state particulate matter standard (PM<sub>10</sub>).

A project would not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the regional air quality plan, if the project emissions were anticipated within the emission inventory contained in the regional air quality plan, referred to as the State Implementation Plan (SIP), and would not exceed the PCAPCD CEQA thresholds adopted October 13, 2016, as follows:

**PCAPCD CEQA THRESHOLDS FOR CRITERIA POLLUTANT EMISSIONS**

1. Construction Threshold of 82 pounds per day for Reactive Organic Gases (ROG), Oxides of Nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), and particulate matter smaller than 10 microns (PM<sub>10</sub>);
2. Operational Threshold of 55 pounds per day for ROG, NO<sub>x</sub> and 82 pounds per day for PM<sub>10</sub>; and
3. Cumulative Threshold of 55 pounds per day for ROG, NO<sub>x</sub> and 82 pounds per day for PM<sub>10</sub>.

The proposed project consists of the expansion of an existing mine permitted under PEAQ2006-0351 (SCH #2008052132) into approximately 4.2 acres of undeveloped land within the eastern portion of APN 040-320-057. The project proposes an extension of the conditional use permit for a period of 20 years to extract up to 210,000 cubic yards of decomposed granite material and boulders to be sold as various rock products for landscaping, slope stabilization and other purposes. An average of 10,500 cubic yards of material would be extracted annually and no more than 16,000 cubic yards of material would be extracted in any single year. This is consistent with the operations of the mine since 2014, which have removed an average of 12,676 cubic yards of material each year with a maximum of 17,583 cubic yards removed in 2018. Up to 51 trees and other vegetation would be removed over the 20-year period. Operations within the expanded area are not expected to result in an increase in traffic generation or haul routes, staffing levels, noise, or operational hours beyond existing operations.

The proposed project would involve operation of heavy-duty mining equipment on the project site. Exhaust emissions would be generated by mining equipment, as well as equipment used for vegetation clearing and earth movement activities. Project mining activities also represent sources of fugitive dust, which includes PM emissions. Additional criteria pollutant emissions would be generated by workers commuting to and from the project site. The existing operation, which consists of similar activities and quantities but in different areas of the site, holds a Permit to Operate (RBSN-50-01) containing production and emission limitations, as issued by the PCAPCD. The PCAPCD Permit to Operate requires that PM emissions be controlled by ensuring that crushed rock is kept moist with water sprayers. Water is required to be applied by nozzles mounted above the conveyor belts that automatically apply a fine spray over the rock material to reduce dust emissions. The plant site, stockpiles, and private access roads are also required to be watered to control dust. All extraction areas are also required to be kept watered as needed to prevent fugitive dust emissions.

Emissions from processing would not exceed operations or activity beyond those analyzed under PEAQ2006-0351, which were below PCAPCD significance thresholds. The proposed project would continue to be submit to the air quality mitigation measures contained within PEAQ2006-0351 which include:

**Mitigation Measures Item III-1,2:****MM III.1****Construction**

1. Suspend all grading operations when fugitive dusts exceed *District Rule 228 Fugitive Dust* limitations. An applicant representative, CARB-certified to perform Visible Emissions Evaluations (VEE), shall routinely

evaluate compliance to Rule 228, Fugitive Dust. Fugitive dust is not to exceed 40% opacity and not go beyond property boundary at any time.

2. Construction equipment exhaust emissions shall not exceed District Rule 202 *Visible Emission* limitations.
3. Minimize idling time to five minutes for all diesel power equipment.
4. Apply water to control dusts as needed to prevent dust impacts off-site.
5. Wash all trucks and equipment leaving the site.
6. Reduce traffic speeds on all unpaved surfaces to 15 miles per hour or less.

Emissions are also regulated Permit to Operate (RBSN-50-01) which includes a number of conditions designed to ensure that project emissions do not exceed PCAPCD permit thresholds.

- The plant manager shall notify the District (per Rule 404) of any upset conditions, breakdown or scheduled maintenance which cause emissions in excess of limits established by District Rules and Regulations.
- The plant manager shall report any changes in operation schedule or process to the District immediately.
- All conveying, transferring and storage operations shall use water mist nozzles installed to effectively control fugitive dust emissions. The water spray nozzles shall be used at all times during the conveying and transfer.
- If necessary, a chemical surfactive system shall be installed on all sprinkler systems to reduce water surface tension and improve control effectiveness.
- All service roads and plan roads shall be maintained to prevent fugitive dust emissions, as prescribed by the Air Pollution Control Officer.
- If necessary, a chemical surfactant or dust palliative shall be applied daily to all service roads and plant grounds, as prescribed by the Air Pollution Control Officer.
- Emission opacity as dark or darker than Ringelmann No. 1 (20 percent opacity) for a period or periods aggregating more than (3) minutes in any one hour is prohibited and is in violation of District Rule 202, Visible Emissions.
- The plant manager shall comply with the Title V Operating Limitations as specified in the Permit to Operate (RBSN-50-01).

Additionally, the project would be required to comply with the State's diesel regulations regarding the tier level of heavy equipment. Recommendations from the PCAPCD regarding diesel-powered heavy equipment are included in Mitigation Measures MM III.2, MM III.3, MM III.4, and MM III.5 to help reduce overall impacts of the project regarding criteria pollutants. With the PCAPCD Permit to Operate in place which would incorporate the proposed area of operations, and with the following recommended Mitigation Measures to reduce the amount of criteria pollutants generated by the project, air quality impacts are anticipated to be less than significant.

#### MM III.2

Alternatives to open burning of vegetative material shall be used to dispose of site-cleared vegetation where feasible. Among suitable alternatives are chipping, mulching, or conversion to biomass fuel.

#### MM III.3

Grid power shall be used (as opposed to diesel generators) for job site power needs where feasible.

#### MM III.4

Mobile heavy equipment shall meet State engine-tier standards in effect at the time of operation.

#### MM III.5

Heavy equipment idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to 5 minutes as feasible, and all heavy equipment shall also be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.

#### **Discussion Item III-3:**

Certain air pollutants are classified by the ARB as toxic air contaminants, or TACs, which are known to increase the risk of cancer and/or other serious health effects. Localized concentrations of Carbon Monoxide (CO) can be a TAC and are typically generated by traffic congestion at intersections. The anticipated traffic resulting from the proposed project would not generate additional traffic beyond the existing operations and would therefore not impact the nearby intersections' ability to operate acceptably and would therefore not result in substantial concentrations of CO emissions at any intersection.

The ARB, PCAPCD, and Placer County recognize the public health risk reductions that can be realized by idling limitations for on-road and off-road equipment. The proposed project would be required to comply with the following

idling restriction (five minute limitation) requirements from ARB and Placer County Code during construction activity, including the use of both on-road and off-road equipment:

- California Air Resources Board In-use Off-road Diesel regulation, Section 2449(d)(3): Off-road diesel equipment shall comply with the five minute idling restriction. Available via the web: [www.arb.ca.gov/regact/2007/ordiesl07/frooal.pdf](http://www.arb.ca.gov/regact/2007/ordiesl07/frooal.pdf)
- Placer County, Code Section 10.14. Available via the web: <http://qcode.us/codes/placercounty/>

Portable equipment and engines (i.e., back-up generators) 50 horsepower (hp) or greater, used during construction activities and operation require either a registration certificate issued by ARB, based on the California Statewide Portable Equipment Registration Program (PERP) or an Authority to Construct (ATC) permit / Permit to Operate issued by PCAPCD. The proposed project would be conditioned to obtain all necessary permits from the ARB and PCAPCD prior to construction. With compliance with State and Local regulations, potential public health impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

#### Discussion Item III-4:

Mining and reclamation activities are not typically associated with the creation of objectionable odors. However, the proposed project would result in additional air pollutant emissions generated by diesel-powered equipment which could emit odors. The project would comply with PCAPCD Rule 205, which prohibits the discharge of air contaminants or other materials that could cause injury, detriment, nuisance, or annoyance to a considerable number of people, cause damage to property, or endanger the health and safety of the public. Compliance with Rule 205 would keep objectionable odors to a less than significant level. No mitigation measures are required.

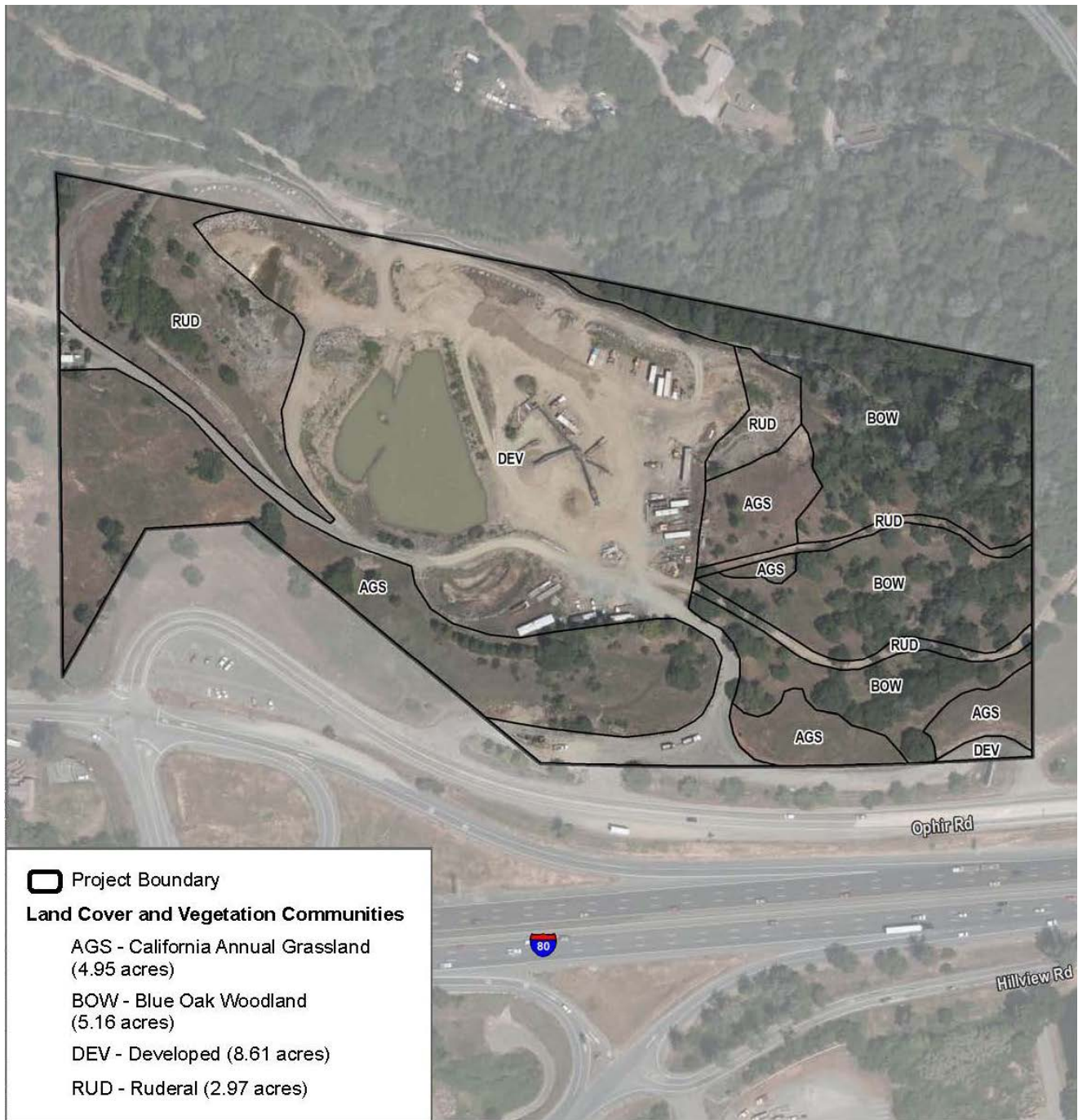
#### IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES – Would the project:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. 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 & Wildlife, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service or National Marine Fisheries Service? (PLN)		X		
2. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community, identified in local or regional plans, policies or regulations, or regulated by the California Department of Fish & Wildlife, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, or Regional Water Quality Control Board? (PLN)		X		
3. Have a substantial adverse effect on federal or state protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) or as defined by state statute, through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? (PLN)				X
4. 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? (PLN)			X	
5. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? (PLN)		X		
6. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? (PLN)				X

7. 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 of restrict the range of an endangered, rare, or threatened species? (PLN)		<b>X</b>		
8. Have a substantial adverse effect on the environment by converting oak woodlands? (PLN)		<b>X</b>		

**Discussion Item IV-1, 2, 7:**

A Biological Resources Assessment (BRA) was completed for the project site by Dudek Biologist Laura Burris dated December 2019. Prior to the site survey, existing information including soil maps and aerial imagery were reviewed. The results of the existing records search of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), California Native Plant Society (CNPS), and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) and 5-mile radius CNDDB queries were reviewed. The survey of the site was conducted on December 6, 2019. The site contains terrestrial non-vegetative land covers (ruderal and developed) and natural vegetation communities including 4.32 acres of blue oak woodland and 4.95 acres of grassland. The grassland habitat is located east of the existing mining operation with the blue oak woodland along the eastern property edge.



**Figure 6. Land Cover and Vegetation Communities**

A total of 45 species of native or naturalized plants, 27 native (60%) and 18 non-native (40%), and 11 wildlife species were recorded during the field survey. Results of the CNDDDB and California Native Plant Society searches revealed 18 special-status plant species that have potential to occur in the vicinity of the project site. Of these, 14 were removed from consideration due to lack of suitable habitat within or adjacent to the site, or due to the project site being outside of the species' known range. Woodland habitats on the site provide potential habitat for Jepson's onion (*Allium jepsonii*), big-scale balsamorhiza (*Balsamorhiza macrolepis*), Parry's horkelia (*Horkelia parryi*), and ovalleaved viburnum (*Viburnum ellipticum*). Potentially special-status species of onion (*Allium spp.*) were observed on the site. These specimens were not identifiable at the time of the survey, which occurred outside of the identifiable period for this species.

Oak woodlands provide many benefits to wildlife including food, cover, and breeding sites. Acorns are an important food source for many mammals, birds, and many other vertebrate and invertebrate species. Other animals depend

on oak leaves and roots, and oak trees are sources of fungi, mistletoe, and insects for rodent and bird species. Oak woodlands also provide food in the form of herbaceous plants in the understory.

Tree cavities provide shelter and breeding sites for birds, and deciduous oaks, such as blue oaks, are important as cavity trees. Downed woody material (e.g., limbs, logs) provide resting and reproductive cover for reptiles, amphibians, and birds. Oak woodlands with more complex understories (e.g., seedlings/saplings, understory trees, shrubs, herbaceous vegetation, downed woody material) provide habitat for a greater variety of species, including ground-nesting birds. A diverse woodland structure provides reproductive sites for diverse wildlife communities. Woodlands on the project site provide potential roosting habitat for native bats and nesting habitat for migratory birds and birds of prey.

Results of the CNDDDB and USFWS searches revealed 11 listed or special-status wildlife species, or species proposed for listing as threatened or endangered by either the CDFW or the USFWS. Of these, nine were removed from consideration due to lack of suitable habitat within or adjacent to the study area, or due to the project site being outside of the species' known range. Two species, Tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*) and Western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*), have the potential to occur within the site; however, it is unlikely that tricolored blackbird or western bumble bee occur at the project site. With implementation of MM IV.4, there would be no impacts to special-status wildlife species. In addition, the site provides potential roosting habitat for native bats and nesting habitat for migratory birds and birds of prey. No native bats or nesting birds were detected at or near the site during the field survey and with implementation of MM IV.2,3, there would be no impacts to special-status wildlife species.

The proposed CUP modification would result in direct impacts to native vegetation present within the project expansion area. Impacts to the onsite biological communities include 2.4 acres of impacts to blue oak woodland. Three individual oak trees greater than 24 inches diameter at breast height, or oak clumps greater than 72 inches in circumference at ground level will also be impacted. Impact will result from grading and expansion of the current developed mine area. For the benefits of slope stabilization, aesthetics, and wildlife habitat, tree removal will be phased with the project, over 20 years, each phase lasting four years. Trees within the area identified for phase one would be removed initially and the remaining expansion area retained until the next phase. Four special-status plant species were found to have low to moderate potential to occur in the project site and therefore may be impacted by the proposed project. Although none of the species with potential to occur were observed during the site visit, the survey was conducted outside of the species' bloom period(s) when the plants may not have been identifiable. The site provides potential habitat for these four special-status plants. With implementation of MM IV.1, potential impacts to special-status plant species would be less than significant.

#### **Mitigation Measures Item IV-1, 2, 7:**

##### MM IV.1

Prior to Grading/Improvement Plan approval and prior to each phase of construction, a focused pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist during the evident and identifiable bloom period for all previously described species that have the potential to occur onsite. The pre-construction surveys shall occur in May of each year for all new areas to be disturbed and mined to cover all of four of the species that have potential to occur. If any of the special-status plant species are identified within areas of potential construction disturbance, they shall be avoided. If the plants cannot be avoided, the plants and/or the seedbank shall be transported to a suitable habitat near the project site. If transplantation/relocation is required, a qualified botanist shall prepare an avoidance and mitigation plan detailing protection and avoidance measures, transplanting procedures, success criteria, and long-term monitoring protocols. In addition, a pre-construction worker awareness training shall be conducted alerting workers to the presence of and protections for special-status plants. A note to this effect shall be included on the Notes page of the project's Grading/Improvement Plans.

##### MM IV.2

All vegetation clearing including removal of trees and shrubs should be completed according to the approved phasing plan for the project and shall occur between September 1 and January 31, if feasible.

If vegetation removal and grading activities begin during the nesting season (February 1 to August 31), a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey of the project area to identify any active nests for each phase of expansion. Additionally, the surrounding 500 feet of the project footprint shall be surveyed for active raptor nests, where accessible. The pre-construction survey shall be conducted within 3 days prior to commencement of ground-disturbing activities. If the pre-construction survey shows that there is no evidence of active nests, a letter report shall be prepared and submitted to the Planning Services Division to document the results survey, and no additional measures are recommended. If construction does not commence within 3 days of the pre-construction survey, or halts for more than 7 days, an additional survey is required prior to starting work.

If nests are found and considered to be active, the project biologist shall establish species-specific buffer zones to prohibit construction activities and minimize nest disturbance until the young have successfully fledged or until the biologist determines that the nest is no longer active. Buffer width will depend on the species in question, surrounding existing sources of disturbance, and specific site characteristics, but may range from 20 feet for some songbirds to 250 feet for most raptors provided the County has concurred (with input from CDFW if deemed warranted) that these buffer ranges are adequate. If active nests are found within any trees slated for removal, then an appropriate buffer shall be established around the trees and the trees shall not be removed until a biologist determines that the nestlings have successfully fledged or the nest has been determined to be inactive. A note to this effect shall be included on the Notes page of the project's Grading/Improvement Plans.

#### MM IV.3

A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey for roosting bats within 7 days prior to clearing or grading operations and removal of trees or rock outcrops for each phase of construction/expansion. This can be done in conjunction with a nesting bird survey. If no bats are observed, a letter report shall be prepared to document the results of the survey, and no additional mitigation measures are recommended. If construction does not commence within 7 days of the pre-construction survey, or halts for more than 7 days, an additional survey is required prior to starting work.

If bats are determined to be roosting on or within 100 feet of the project area, then the biologist shall establish an appropriate buffer around the roost site in coordination with CDFW. In addition, a pre-construction worker awareness training shall be conducted alerting workers to the presence of and protections for various bat species. If bat species are found to be roosting in the project area, the project proponent shall coordinate with CDFW to determine appropriate additional mitigation measures which may include, but not necessarily limited to, staging tree removal activities over a two-day period to relocate the roosting bats or installing bat boxes or other alternate roost structures. Evidence of successful completion of additional mitigation measures, if required, shall be provided to the County.

#### MM IV.4

Prior to initiation of construction activities, all construction personnel shall participate in a worker environmental training program that will educate workers regarding the special-status plant and wildlife species with the potential to occur on the project site, the need to avoid impacts, state and federal protection, and the legal implications of violating environmental laws and regulations. At a minimum this training may be accomplished through tailgate presentations at the project site and the distribution of informational brochures, with descriptions of sensitive biological resources and regulatory protections, to construction personnel prior to initiation of construction work.

#### **Discussion Item IV-3**

A delineation of wetlands and other waters of the United States was not performed since the topography of the project site, which consists of a single hilltop and existing mining facilities, presents a condition such that no aquatic features would be present that would potentially be subject to regulation. The mining pit in the central portion of the site is a manmade feature that ponds water during portions of the year, but is not considered jurisdictional under federal, state or local definitions. The South Canal is not a natural feature and is not regulated. Therefore, there is no impact.

#### **Discussion Item IV-4:**

Wildlife corridors are landscape/habitat features, usually linear in nature, that facilitate the movement of animals (or plants) over time between two or more areas of otherwise disjunct habitat. Corridors can be small and even human made (e.g., highway underpasses, culverts, bridges), narrow linear habitat areas (e.g., riparian strips, hedgerows), or wider landscape-level extensions of habitat that ultimately connect even larger core habitat areas. Depending on the size and extent, wildlife corridors can be used during animal migration, foraging events, and juvenile dispersal; they ultimately serve to facilitate genetic exchange between core populations, provide avenues for plant seed dispersal, enable increased biodiversity and maintenance of ecosystem integrity within habitat patches, and help offset the negative impacts of habitat fragmentation (Hilty et al. 2006). Vegetated areas throughout the project site may provide value as potential wildlife corridors or habitat linkages between the surrounding rural, natural areas.

The California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project, developed by CDFW and the California Department of Transportation, describes and depicts a functional network of connected wildlands that is essential to the continued support of California's diverse natural communities in the face of human development and climate change (Caltrans et al. 2010). The Essential Habitat Connectivity Project identifies large, relatively natural habitat blocks in California that support native biodiversity and depicts the relative permeability of areas to provide some level of ecological connectivity between these habitat blocks. The Essential Connectivity Map indicate that the site is not located within an area that provides connectivity between similar habitat patches (CDFW 2019c). The site is just north of I-80 and

is generally surrounded by rural residential and commercial development. Although the site supports woodland habitat, primarily in the eastern area, which provides a potential migratory corridor with suitable cover for wildlife, the proximity of the habitat to I-80 and to mine-related activities in the central and northern areas of the site make the site less than ideal for wildlife movement. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

#### Discussion Item IV-5, 8:

Placer County has identified the value of its native and landmark trees and has adopted measures for their preservation. The Woodland Conservation Ordinance (Chapter 19, Article 19.50 of the County Code) provides policy to preserve and protect native trees. Placer County also has adopted an Oak Woodland Management Plan and developed Oak Woodland Impact Guidelines. The guidelines apply to any discretionary entitlement subject to CEQA review on a property occupied by oak woodland where the woodland comprises an area larger than two acres. The proposed mining expansion will impact blue oak woodlands and significant trees. Significant trees are defined as oak trees greater than 24 inches diameter at breast height, or oak clumps greater than 72 inches in circumference at ground level. The reduction in habitat associated with the mining activities on this site represents an adverse effect on the environment and the Placer County Woodland Conservation Ordinance and CEQA Section 21083.4 requires mitigation for this loss.

The biological consultant for the project, Dudek, analyzed the trees on the project site as part of its September 2020 Woodland Inventory. Consistent with Placer County's Oak Woodland Impact Guidelines and the 2020 Woodland Inventory, the project will impact 2.4 acres blue oak woodland and three significant trees identified with a combined DBH of 87.4 inches (See Figure 7, Oak Woodland Map). The impact results from grading and expansion of the current developed mine area. This would be a significant impact. However, with implementation of the mitigation identified below, impacts to protected trees would be reduced to a less-than-significant level.



**Figure 7. Oak Woodland Map**

#### MM IV.5

Prior to Grading/Improvement Plan approval, oak woodland impacts and significant trees identified for removal, and/or trees with disturbance to the critical root zone, shall be mitigated as follows:

A) The applicant shall mitigate for the loss of oak woodlands through one, or a combination of the following, subject to Planning Services Division approval, consistent with the requirements of Public Resources Code (CEQA) Section 21083.4:

- i. Submit payment of fees to the Placer County Tree Preservation Fund for oak woodland conservation at a 2:1 ratio (based on acreage) consistent with Chapter 19.50.090 (C) Placer County Woodland Conservation Ordinance - Replacement Programs and Penalties. These fees shall be calculated based upon the current market value to preserve and maintain in perpetuity similar oak woodland acreage.
- ii. Purchase and recordation of off-site conservation easements at a 2:1 ratio (based on acreage) at an in-county location approved by Placer County to mitigate the loss of oak woodlands.
- iii. Provide for a combination of payment to the Tree Preservation Fund and recordation of an off-site conservation easement for oak woodlands.
- iv. Restore or enhance an oak woodland through the planting, monitoring and maintenance of an appropriate number of trees in a former oak woodland. Restoration or enhancement is limited to half the mitigation requirement. The balance of the mitigation requirement must be satisfied by in-perpetuity conservation through compliance with other measures in this section. Restoration or enhancement includes preparation of an oak woodland management plan defining maintenance, monitoring, and reporting responsibilities to ensure long-term survivability of the plantings. The oak woodland management plan is subject to Planning Services Division approval.

B) The applicant shall mitigate for the loss of significant trees (i.e. single trunk trees within the project impact area that are greater than 24 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) or clumps greater than 72 inches in circumference at ground level) at an inch for inch basis. Compensatory mitigation shall consist of payment of a mitigation fee into the Placer County Tree Preservation Fund at a rate of \$125 per DBH of significant trees removed or impacted.

Although oak woodland impacts and significant tree removal will be phased, all approved tree removal mitigation fees shall be paid prior to Grading/Improvement Plan approval.

#### MM IV.6

The Grading/Improvement Plans shall include the following note and shall show placement of temporary construction fencing as follows: The applicant shall install a four foot tall, brightly colored (usually yellow or orange), synthetic mesh material construction fence (or an equivalent approved by the Development Review Committee) along the project phasing boundary shown in Figure 2, above, prior to any construction equipment being moved on-site or any construction activities taking place for each phase. No site disturbance shall be allowed until this condition is satisfied and temporary fencing shall not be altered during construction. No grading, clearing, storage of equipment or machinery, etc., may occur until a representative of the DRC has inspected and approved all temporary construction fencing.

The Grading/Improvement Plans shall also include a note and show placement of permanent boundary fencing with signage at the extent of the approved mining area boundary. Prior to commencement of the fifth phase of the project of the project (Year 17-20) the applicant shall install a four foot tall permanent fence (or an equivalent approved by the Development Review Committee) along the mining expansion perimeter where trees have been identified to remain prior to any fifth phase grading or vegetation removal activities taking place. No disturbance outside the active phased mining expansion area shall be allowed. Any encroachment into future project phase areas, including critical root zones of trees to be saved, must first be approved by the Development Review Committee. Permanent fencing shall not be altered during construction without written approval of the Development Review Committee. Grading and clearing for the project's fifth phase may not occur until a representative of the Development Review Committee has inspected and approved all permanent fencing. Permanent fencing can be removed with mine site reclamation.

#### **Discussion Item IV-6:**

The Placer County Conservation Program (HCP/NCCP), County Aquatic Resources Program (CARP), Cultural Resources Management Plan, and related implementing ordinances and programs (PCCP) were adopted by the Placer County Board of Supervisors on September 23, 2020. The project falls within the PCCP service area; however quarries and other mining projects are not covered activities and are excluded from participation in the HCP/NCCP. Therefore, there is no impact.

**V. CULTURAL RESOURCES – Would the project:**

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5? (PLN)		X		
2. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines, Section 15064.5? (PLN)		X		
3. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries? (PLN)		X		
4. Have the potential to cause a physical change, which would affect unique ethnic cultural values? (PLN)		X		
5. Restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area? (PLN)		X		

**Discussion Item V-1:**

A pedestrian survey of the proposed 4.2-acre expansion area was conducted December 9, 2019 by Dudek archaeologist Ross Owen, MA, RPA. No archaeological artifacts or features were identified. The western two-thirds of the area show high levels of disturbance from the active surface mining operations. No associated artifacts were identified. No archaeological resources were observed. One historical resource runs beneath the proposed expansion site, the South Canal Tunnel, a contributor to the Drum-Spaulding Hydroelectric District system. Both the tunnel and the larger system are listed on the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for their association with hydroelectric development in the early 20th century. The resource is approximately 140 feet beneath the immediate area proposed for mining, as represented by the ultimate depth of the mining operation, therefore this feature would not be impacted as designed. The existing site displays considerable disturbance from the active mining operation; however, it is always possible that intact archaeological deposits are present at subsurface levels. With the following mitigation measure, potential impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures Item V-1:**MM V.1

All employees should be alerted to the potential to encounter archaeological material. In the event that cultural resources (sites, features, or artifacts) are exposed during work activities for the proposed Project, all ground disturbing work occurring within 100 feet of the find shall immediately stop until a qualified specialist, meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards, can evaluate the significance of the find and determine whether additional study is warranted. Prehistoric archaeological deposits may be indicated by the presence of discolored or dark soil, fire-affected material, concentrations of fragmented or whole freshwater bivalves shell, burned or complete bone, non-local lithic materials, or the characteristic observed to be atypical of the surrounding area. Common prehistoric artifacts may include modified or battered lithic materials; lithic or bone tools that appeared to have been used for chopping, drilling, or grinding; projectile points; fired clay ceramics or non-functional items; and other items. Historic-age deposits are often indicated by the presence of glass bottles and shards, ceramic material, building or domestic refuse, ferrous metal, or old features such as concrete foundations or privies. Depending upon the significance of the find under CEQA (14 CCR 15064.5(f); PRC Section 21082), the archaeologist may simply record the find and allow work to continue. If the discovery proves significant under CEQA, additional work, such as preparation of an archaeological treatment plan, testing, or data recovery may be warranted.

**Discussion Item V-2, 3, 4, 5:**

Tribes who requested notification of proposed projects within this geographic area were contacted for consultation in accordance with requirements of Assembly Bill (AB) 52. In response to the offer, the United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) requested inclusion of mitigation measures for Inadvertent Discoveries, with the following mitigation measure, potential impacts would be less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures Item V-2, 3, 4, 5:****MM V.2**

If potential tribal cultural resources (TCRs), archaeological resources, other cultural resources, articulated, or disarticulated human remains are discovered during construction activities, all work shall cease within 100 feet of the find (based on the apparent distribution of cultural resources). Examples of potential cultural materials include midden soil, artifacts, chipped stone, exotic (non-native) rock, or unusual amounts of baked clay, shell, or bone.

A qualified cultural resources specialist and Native American Representative from the traditionally and culturally affiliated Native American Tribe(s) will assess the significance of the find and make recommendations for further evaluation and treatment as necessary. Culturally appropriate treatment that preserves or restores the cultural character and integrity of a Tribal Cultural Resource may be, but is not limited to, processing materials for reburial, minimizing handling of cultural objects, leaving objects in place within the landscape, construction monitoring of further construction activities by Tribal representatives of the traditionally and culturally affiliated Native American Tribe, and/or returning objects to a location within the project area where they will not be subject to future impacts. The United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) does not consider curation of TCRs to be appropriate or respectful and requests that materials not be permanently curated, unless specifically requested by the Tribe.

If articulated or disarticulated human remains are discovered during construction activities, the County Coroner and Native American Heritage Commission shall be contacted immediately. Upon determination by the County Coroner that the find is Native American in origin, the Native American Heritage Commission will assign the Most Likely Descendant(s) who will work with the project proponent to define appropriate treatment and disposition of the burials.

Following a review of the find and consultation with appropriate experts, the authority to proceed may be accompanied by the addition of development requirements which provide for protection of the site and/or additional measures necessary to address the unique or sensitive nature of the site. The treatment recommendations made by the cultural resource specialist and the Native American Representative will be documented in the project record. Any recommendations made by these experts that are not implemented, must be documented and explained in the project record. Work in the area(s) of the cultural resource discovery may only proceed after authorization is granted by the Placer County Community Development Resource Agency following coordination with cultural resources experts and tribal representatives as appropriate.

**VI. ENERGY – Would the project:**

<b>Environmental Issue</b>	<b>Potentially Significant Impact</b>	<b>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures</b>	<b>Less Than Significant Impact</b>	<b>No Impact</b>
1. Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation? (PLN)			<b>X</b>	
2. Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? (PLN)				<b>X</b>

**Discussion Item VI-1:**

The main forms of available energy supply are electricity, natural gas, and oil. Energy would be used during mining and reclamation operations for the proposed project, and once reclamation is complete, energy would not be used. CARB standards for construction equipment include measures to reduce emissions from vehicles by subjecting fleet owners to retrofit or accelerated replacement/repower requirements and imposing idling limitations on owners, operators, renters, or lessees of off-road diesel vehicles. The proposed project construction would also be required to comply with all applicable Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD) rules and regulations.

Energy use associated with operation of the proposed project would be typical of a mining operation. In addition, maintenance activities during operations, such as landscape maintenance, would involve the use of electric or gas-powered equipment.

While the proposed project would continue to utilize operational energy, this demand will not likely increase beyond existing use. The proposed project would result in an impact if a project would result in the inefficient use or waste of

energy. The proposed project is required to comply with all applicable standards and regulations regarding energy conservation and fuel efficiency, which would ensure that the future uses would be designed to be energy efficient to the maximum extent practicable. Accordingly, the proposed project would not be considered to result in a wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary use of energy, and impacts related to construction and operational energy would be considered less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

#### Discussion Item VI-2:

The Placer County Sustainability Plan (PCSP), adopted by the Placer County Board of Supervisors on January 28, 2020, includes goals and policies for energy efficiency. The proposed project is consistent with the PCSP. Therefore, there is no impact.

#### VII. GEOLOGY & SOILS – Would the project:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? (ESD)		X		
2. 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? (ESD)			X	
3. Be located on expansive soils, as defined in Section 1802.3.2 of the California Building Code (2007), creating substantial direct or indirect risks to life or property? (ESD)			X	
4. 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? (EH)				X
5. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or unique geologic or physical feature? (PLN)			X	
6. Result in significant disruptions, displacements, compaction or overcrowding of the soil? (ESD)		X		
7. Result in substantial change in topography or ground surface relief features? (ESD)		X		
8. Result in exposure of people or property to geologic and geomorphological (i.e. Avalanches) hazards such as earthquakes, landslides, mudslides, seismic-related ground failure, or similar hazards? (PLN, ESD)			X	

#### Discussion Item VII-1, 6, 7:

The project site is a 19.45-acre irregularly-shaped polygon that is the current location for the Robinson Newcastle Mining operation that has operated under various Conditional Use Permits since 1977. A large portion of the site consists of a previously graded/mined area and associated access roads. The parcel also includes an existing office trailer, stockpiles, settling basin, and sorting conveyor belts. The project proposal would result in the expansion of the existing mine to include 4.2 acres of additional undeveloped land within the eastern portion of the project property.

The Natural Resource Conservation Service Web Soil Survey identifies the predominant soil types on the site as Andregg Course Sandy Loam (rocky, 30 to 50 percent slopes), Ink Very Cobbly Sandy Clay Loam (5 to 30 percent slopes), Inky Variant Cobbly Loam (2 to 30 percent slopes), and pits and dumps.

The Andregg Course Sandy Loam (rocky, 30 to 50 percent slopes) is located along the southern portion of the Parcel closest to Ophir Road. The soil is a moderately deep, steep, well-drained soil underlain by weathered granitic bedrock. It formed in residuum on foothills in the Loomis Basin. The permeability is moderately rapid, the surface runoff is

rapid, and the erosion hazard is high. The major limitations of this material are high erosion potential, depth to rock, and slope.

The Inky Very Cobbly Sandy Clay Loam (5 to 30 percent slopes) is located from the center of the parcel to the northern property line along the entire width of the parcel (50 percent of the project site). The soil is a shallow, well-drained soil underlain by Andesitic Conglomerate. It formed in residuum on long broad volcanic ridges and side slopes of the Newcastle hills. The permeability is high and the runoff is also high. The major limitations are the steep slopes, shallow depth to bedrock and erosion potential.

The Inky Variant Cobbly Loam (2 to 30 percent slopes) is moderately deep to deep, well-drained soil underlain by Andesitic Conglomerates. It formed in the residuum on long, broad, volcanic ridges and side slopes. The permeability is high and the runoff is also high. The major limitations are the steep slopes and erosion potential.

In the center of the parcel, the soil is classified as pits and dumps. Since this is an operational mine, the pits and dumps are stockpiles that are sorted through conveyor belts into specific aggregate sizes. These stockpiles are loosely compacted and require erosion control measures to prevent excessive runoff. The current erosion control plan has the site located in a depression that directs runoff to the center of the parcel where the settling basin is located to contain sediment associated with the mining operation.

The project proposal is to expand the existing mining footprint by an additional 4.2 acres by removal of 210,000 cubic yards of material over the next 20 years. The predominant soil type in this expansion area is Andregg Course Sandy Loam (rocky, 20 to 50 percent slopes)

Any required slopes would meet the Placer County maximum allowable slope of 2:1 upon completion, including but not limited to, the gravel pit wall and berm. Any erosion potential would be high during operation and best management practices and regulatory compliance measures implemented by the existing mining operations would continue to be applied to mining operations into the expanded area.

The project's site specific impacts associated with steep slopes and high erosion potential can be mitigated to a less than significant level by implementing the following mitigation measures:

**Mitigation Measures Item VII-1:**

MM VII.1

A monitoring report shall be submitted to ESD by the applicant's representative prior to October 1 of each year of operation of the pit. The report shall discuss ongoing mitigation for erosion control, drainage, revegetation, and slope stability and specify any additional measures that need to be implemented prior to the onset of the rainy season.

MM VII.2

Final cut slopes shall be no steeper than 2:1 (horizontal:vertical) as recommended by Joslin Geotechnical in their slope stability analysis report dated January 19, 2020.

**Discussion Item VII-2 ,3, 8:**

This project is not located in a sensitive geologic area or in an area that typically experiences soil instability or expansive soils. Soil characteristics for the Andregg-Course Sandy Loam state the potential limitation being highly erosive, however with proper best management practices the risk of erosion during mining operations would be minimal. The proposed project would comply with Placer County construction and improvement standards to reduce impacts related to soils, including on or offsite landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse.

The project is located within Placer County. The California Department of Mines and Geology classifies the project site as low severity earthquake zone. The project site is considered to have low seismic risk with respect to faulting, ground shaking, seismically related ground failure and liquefaction. There is a potential for the site to be subjected to at least moderate earthquake shaking in the future. However, the final proposed 2:1 slopes have been determined stable by the Joslin Geotechnical report. Further, the future buildings would be constructed in compliance with the California Building Code, which includes seismic standards. Therefore, impacts of unstable soil, expansive soils and geologic/seismic hazards are less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**Discussion Item VII-4:**

The project would not be utilizing sewage disposal, and would not require or result in the construction of new on-site sewage disposal systems. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item VII-5:**

The site does not contain unique geologic or physical features. The geology of the western foothills in this area is largely the same as that comprising the Sierras at higher elevations. The project site represents an intersection of Mesozoic volcanic rock formations and Mesozoic granitic rock formations. Mesozoic volcanic rock formations are characterized by andesite and rhyolite flow rocks, greenstone, volcanic breccia and other pyroclastic rocks; in part strongly metamorphosed. The project site includes volcanic rocks of Franciscan Complex: basaltic pillow lava, diabase, greenstone, and minor pyroclastic rocks. Mesozoic granitic formations are characterized by the presence of granite, quartz monzonite, granodiorite, and quartz diorite. These soils are not suitable to support the process of silicification or other processes required for the preservation of paleontological deposits. As such, ground-disturbing activities for the proposed project would not directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature, and therefore impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS – Would the project:**

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? (PLN, Air Quality)		X		
2. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? (PLN, Air Quality)		X		

**Discussion Item VII-1,2:**

Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions of primary concern from land use projects include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), methane (CH<sub>4</sub>), and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O). Construction related activities resulting in exhaust emissions may come from fuel combustion for heavy-duty diesel and gasoline-powered equipment, portable auxiliary equipment, material delivery trucks, and worker commuter trips. Operational GHG emissions would result from motor vehicle trips generated by the mining-related equipment and material transport. The proposed project would result in mining, processing, and site reclamation.

The California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB32) signed into law in September 2006, requires statewide GHG emissions to be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. AB32 established regulatory, reporting, and market mechanisms to achieve this goal and provides guidance to help attain quantifiable reductions in emissions efficiently, without limiting population and economic growth. In September of 2016, Senate Bill (SB) 32 was signed by the Governor, to establish a California GHG reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

On October 13, 2016, the Placer County Air Pollution Control District (PCAPCD) adopted CEQA significance thresholds for GHG emissions as shown below. The Bright-line Threshold of 10,000 metric tons (MT) CO<sub>2</sub>e/yr threshold for construction and operational phases, and the De Minimis level of 1,100 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e/yr for operational, were used to determine significance. GHG emissions from projects that exceed 10,000 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e/yr would be deemed to have a cumulatively considerable contribution to global climate change. For a land use project, this level of emissions is equivalent to a project size of approximately 646 single-family dwelling units, or a 323,955 square feet commercial building.

**PCAPCD CEQA THRESHOLDS FOR GHG EMISSIONS**

1. Bright-line Threshold of 10,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e per year for the construction and operational phases of land use projects as well as the stationary source projects
2. Efficiency Matrix for the operational phase of land use development projects when emissions exceed
  - a. the De Minimis Level, and
3. De Minimis Level for the operational phases of 1,100 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e per year.

Existing mining operations currently contribute to greenhouse gas emissions; implementation of the proposed project which consists of an expansion of the sand and gravel operations and potentially a longer operational timeframe would increase these local GHG emissions. Estimated GHG emissions attributable to the proposed project would be primarily associated with increases of CO<sub>2</sub> and other GHGs, such as methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O), from

mobile sources and utility usage. CO<sub>2</sub>e is Carbon Dioxide Equivalent, a measurement that expresses units of different greenhouse gases as equivalent to units of carbon dioxide in the ability to affect global warming. Given the project size and proposed material to be extracted (no more than 16,000 cubic yards in a single year), the proposed project is not expected to exceed the PCAPCD's CEQA thresholds for GHG. An air quality analysis (CalEEMod 2016) performed for a project (Nevada County, HBE Greenhorn Creek Aggregate Mine Expansion) with similar activities but greater amount of material processing was found to be below PCAPCD thresholds. Mitigation Measures III 1-5 requires emissions-reducing measures during operational activities which will help reduce greenhouse gas emissions during the project's GHG emissions. The mitigation would reduce the overall GHG impact to a level that is less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures Item VII-1,2:**

MM III.1, MM III.2, MM III.3, MM III.4, and MM III.5

**IX. HAZARDS & HAZARDOUS MATERIALS** – Would the project:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? (EH)			X	
2. 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? (EH)			X	
3. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? (AQ)			X	
4. 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? (EH)				X
5. 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? (PLN)				X
6. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (PLN)				X
7. Expose people or structures, either directly or indirectly, to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? (PLN)			X	

**Discussion Item IX-1, 2:**

The use of hazardous substances during normal construction and self-storage activities is expected to be limited in nature, and would be subject to standard handling and storage requirements.

*The following standard condition of approval shall apply to the proposed project:*

"Hazardous materials" as defined in Health and Safety Code Division 20, Chapter 6.95 shall not be allowed on any premises in regulated quantities (55 gallons, 200 cubic feet, 500 pounds) without notification to Environmental Health Services. A property owner/occupant who handles or stores regulated quantities of hazardous materials shall comply with the following within 30 days of commencing operations:

Operator must complete an electronic submittal to California Environmental Reporting System (CERS) and pay required permit fees.

If the business will generate hazardous waste from routine operations, obtain an EPA ID number from the

## Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC).

Note: If the business owner/operator is unsure of what constitutes a hazardous material or waste, please contact Environmental Health Services for assistance at 530-745-2300.

Impacts related to the release of hazardous substances are considered less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**Discussion Item IX-3:**

There are no existing or proposed school sites within one-quarter mile of the project site. Further, operation of the proposed project does not propose a use that involves activities that would emit hazardous substances or waste that would affect a substantial number of people and is therefore considered to have a less than significant impact. No mitigation measures are required.

**Discussion Item IX-4:**

The project is not located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. and would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item IX-5:**

The proposed project is not located within an airport land use plan or within two miles of a public airport, public use airport or private airstrip and would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the proposed project area. The proposed project would have no impacts to airports or airstrips. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item IX-6:**

There are no approved or adopted emergency response or emergency evacuation plans that would be impacted by the proposed project. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item IX-7:**

The proposed project site is located within a California State Responsibility Area and is designated by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection as moderate risk for wildfire. Portions of the project site contain oak woodlands with moderate vegetation. The proposed project has been reviewed by the Placer County Fire District and has been designed with adequate emergency vehicle access and hydrants for use by the District to reduce the risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires to a less than significant level. No mitigation measures are required.

**X. HYDROLOGY & WATER QUALITY – Would the project:**

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade ground water quality? (EH)				X
2. Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? (EH)				X
3. 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: a) substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or offsite; b) create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems? (ESD)		X		

4. Create or contribute runoff water which would include substantial additional sources of polluted runoff or otherwise substantially degrade surface water quality either during construction or in the post-construction condition? (ESD)			X	
5. Place housing or improvements within a 100-year flood hazard area either as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map which would: a) impede or redirect flood flows; or b) expose people or structures to risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding c) risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? (ESD)				X
6. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? (EH)			X	

**Discussion Item X-1:**

This project would not rely on groundwater wells as a potable water source. The project would not violate water quality standards with respect to potable water. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item X-2:**

This project would not utilize groundwater, and is not located in an area where soils are conducive to groundwater recharge. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item X-3:**

The proposed project would include the mining of an additional 210,000 cubic yards of aggregates over a 20-year time period, within an existing mining site that has historically removed 1,126,000 cubic yards of material. The expanded area for mining operations is approximately 4.2 acres in size and is located within the existing 19.5-acre parcel where existing mining operation occurs. Access and haul routes to and from the Project site would not change from those used for existing mining operations. Access to the parcel is provided by an existing onsite road which connects directly to the County maintained Ophir Road. There are no onsite road improvements planned at this time. Maintenance of the existing access road would be ongoing as it is under current mining operation, including minor grading to smooth the roadway surface and control erosion.

Roadway drainage is currently collected via a roadside ditch and would continue to be conveyed via sheet flow over the naturally occurring drainage path. Surface runoff within the study area generally drains toward a central reservoir at the base of the existing mine pit. Settling basins and pits reduce the risk of possible siltation caused by erosion. Erosion control measures that have been effective for the current mining operation would continue to be implemented for the expanded operation. The overall drainage patterns for the proposed ultimate project would not be significantly changed and drainage would continue to flow to the existing settling basin.

The proposed project does not include any additional impervious surface and thus, no downstream drainage facility or property owner would be significantly impacted by any minimal increase in surface runoff.

The project's site specific impacts associated with altering the existing drainage pattern of the site, substantially increasing surface runoff, and/or exceeding the capacity of the downstream system can be mitigated to a less than significant level by implementing the following mitigation measures:

**Mitigation Measures Item X-3:**MM X.1

The applicant shall maintain the existing settling pond to trap silt and sedimentation that is generated on the site to preclude said material from exiting or escaping the site.

MM X.2

This project is located within the area covered by Placer County's municipal stormwater quality permit, pursuant to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II program. Project-related stormwater discharges are subject to all applicable requirements of said permit. BMPs shall be designed to mitigate (minimize, infiltrate, filter, or treat) stormwater runoff in accordance with "Attachment 4" of Placer County's NPDES Municipal

Stormwater Permit (State Water Resources Control Board NPDES General Permit No. CAS000004).

Water quality Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be designed according to the California Stormwater Quality Association Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbooks for Construction, for New Development / Redevelopment, and/or for Industrial and Commercial, (and/or other similar source as approved by the Engineering and Surveying Department (ESD)). The project owner shall maintain all BMPs as required to ensure effectiveness.

**Discussion Item X-4:**

Potential impacts to water quality would be minimal as the expanded construction footprint is small in comparison to the overall acreage of the project site and the development would be required to comply with the West Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manual as applicable, and a Stormwater Quality Plan would be required to address water quality impacts. The proposed expansion would not create runoff that would substantially increase pollutants or significantly degrade long term surface water quality beyond the existing conditions. The proposed expansion will follow the current erosion control plan of having all drainage flow to the central settling basin. Therefore, the impact of substantially increasing polluted runoff or substantially degrading surface water quality is less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**Discussion Item X-5:**

The project is not located within a 100-year flood hazard area as defined and mapped by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and no flood flows would be impeded or redirected during construction. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item X-6:**

This project would not utilize groundwater nor would the project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge. Therefore, impacts are anticipated to be less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**XI. LAND USE & PLANNING – Would the project:**

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Physically divide an established community? (PLN)				X
2. 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? (EH, ESD, PLN)			X	
3. Result in the development of incompatible uses and/or the creation of land use conflicts? (PLN)				X
4. Cause economic or social changes that would result in significant adverse physical changes to the environment such as urban decay or deterioration? (PLN)				X

**Discussion Item XI-1, 3, 4:**

The proposed project is to continue and expand the existing mining operation onsite. Because of the site's topography and natural buffer and low intensity of the longstanding mining operation, the industrial use is compatible with surrounding land uses. The site's Mineral Reserve Combining Zone District identifies the property as having valuable mineral resources and designates the purpose and intent of the site as appropriate for the mining activities that occur there. Current operations of the Robinson Gravel Pit are conducted within the existing project site. Adjacent parcels (APNs 040-320-018-000, 040-320-040-000, 040-320-041-000, 040-320-042-000, and 040-320-056-000), are also owned by the applicant. All of the parcels are identified with the "-SP," Special Purpose combined zoning district. The limits of the special purpose zoning identifier are confined to the parcels identified above as being associated/owned by Robinson Sand & Gravel. The parcel within which current Robinson Gravel Pit operations occur (APN: 040-320-057-000\_ carries a "-MR," Mineral Reserve combining district identifier. The site is developed, and implementation of the project would not physically divide an established community or cause economic or social changes resulting in physical adverse impacts including urban decay. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item XI-2:**

The proposed project includes the continuation and expansion of the existing mining operation onsite. The proposed project does not conflict with any applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations. The proposed project design does not significantly conflict with General Plan/Community Plan/Specific Plan policies related to grading, drainage, and transportation. The proposal does not conflict with any Environmental Health land use plans, policies or regulations. Therefore, this impact is less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**XII. MINERAL RESOURCES – Would the project:**

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. 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? (PLN)				X
2. 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? (PLN)				X

**Discussion Item XII-1, 2:**

An existing aggregate extraction operation exists onsite. Mineral extraction is allowed in the Farm zone district with approval of a Conditional Use Permit. The proposed project site has been mined at a commercial-scale and is a valuable, locally important mineral resource. Under the proposed project, the site would continue to be mined for resources.

The Mineral Land Classification of Placer County (California Department of Conservation – Division of Mines and Geology, 1995) was prepared for the purpose of identifying and documenting the various mineral compounds found in the soils of Placer County. The Classification is comprised of three primary mineral deposit types: those mineral deposits formed by mechanical concentration (placer gold); those mineral deposits formed by hydrothermal processes (lode gold, silver, copper, zinc, and tungsten); and construction aggregate resources, industrial mineral deposits and other deposits formed by magmatic segregation processes (sand, gravel, crushed stone, decomposed granite, clay, shale, quartz and chromite).

With respect to those deposits formed by mechanical concentration, the site and immediate vicinity are classified as Mineral Resource Zone MRZ-1, meaning, this is an area where geologic information indicates that there is little likelihood for the presence of significant mineral resources.

With respect to those deposits formed by hydrothermal processes, the site is classified as Mineral Resource Zone MRZ-3a (Western County Region), meaning, this area is underlain by volcanic rocks that host syngenetic massive sulfide deposits enriched in copper, zinc, and locally gold.

With respect to those areas classified for construction aggregate resources, the site is classified as Mineral Resources Zone MRZ-2a (dg-1), meaning, the site is identified for its decomposed granite resources. The Mineral Land Classification report identifies and describes the site as: "The Newcastle pit, which is on the north side of Interstate 80 just east of Newcastle, has been mining decomposed granite for a variety of purposes including fill, pipe bedding, landscaping, and track arena surfacing. The decomposed granite produced at the Newcastle pit ranges from beige to green."

The purpose of the project is to continue to recover the sand, gravel, building stone, and base rock available onsite for use as a local building supply material. Therefore, there is no impact.

**XIII. NOISE** – Would the project result in:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. 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? (PLN)			X	
2. Generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? (PLN)			X	
3. 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? (PLN)				X

**Discussion Item XIII-1:**

The Robinson Mine has been in operation since 1976. Since that time, subsequent extensions and updates to the Conditional Use Permit for the surface mining operations have been approved. The latest Conditional Use Permit (PCPM 20100005) was granted in 2010 and established several conditions that are relevant to noise generation. Condition #4 of the 2010 CUP limits the hours of operation to between 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM from May through September, and to between 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM from October through April, unless additional timeframes are authorized by the Planning Director. Condition #11 of the 2010 CUP limits operational noise levels associated with the Robinson Gravel Pit to below 65 dBA Ldn at the nearest residential property line.

A Noise Analysis was completed for the proposed project by Dudek dated January 2020. An ambient noise survey was conducted on December 9, 2019 and on December 17, 2019 to document the existing ambient noise in the vicinity of the proposed project site. During the long-term monitoring, the primary background noise source affecting the monitoring location was vehicular traffic on the local roadway network (Interstate 80 and Lazonos Road). Long-term unattended ambient noise monitoring was performed at one location and short-term noise level monitoring was performed at five locations. Reference sound level monitoring was performed as part of the short-term survey on December 9, 2019 to characterize the sound levels generated by various sources during operations at the Robinson Mine/Gravel Pit. During the monitoring period, significant noise sources associated with surrounding land uses were documented and their contribution to the overall noise level was calculated.

The proposed project would expand the current mining operation to the east. The mining operations are proposed to remain consistent with current operations in terms of operational hours; materials extracted, processed, and hauled; and on-site equipment used. Equipment that would be in use during operation of the proposed project would include the current sorting plant/conveyer system, loader, dozer, excavator, backhoe, water truck and haul trucks. During the December 9, 2019 measurement survey, reference noise levels for the sorting plant, loader and dozer were documented. The sorting plant was fully operational for the entire measurement period, with the dozer and loader operational for shorter periods of time to support specific operations (i.e., loading the material hopper, relocating rock piles). The noise levels for the Komatsu loader were not audible or measurable over the sound levels generated by the sorting plant.

The nearest noise-sensitive residential property line outside of the Special Purpose combining district that encompasses the propose project parcels is located at 284 Lozanos Road. Operations of the sorting plant are assumed to remain at the current location, approximately 950 feet southwest of the 284 Lozanos Road property line. Earthwork operations associated with the proposed project would occur in the 4.2-acre eastward expansion of the mine, and therefore approximately 150-feet closer to the nearest noise-sensitive receptor at 284 Lozanos Road than current operations, from the acoustical center of current operations. The acoustical center of the earthwork operations would be approximately 700 feet southwest of the nearest noise-sensitive receptor, with the closest operations associated with the earthwork operations approximately 480 feet southwest.

The Noise Analysis estimates that operational noise levels associated with the proposed project would be

approximately 58 dBA Leq, and 55 dBA Ldn at the nearest noise-sensitive residential property line outside of the special purpose combining district. Based on the notes of Placer County General Plan, Table 9.1, if an existing use permit has an “established noise level standards for an existing use, those standards shall supersede the levels specified in Tables 9-1 and 9-3.” As discussed previously, the existing CUP establishes a 65 dBA Ldn noise level threshold for the existing use. The predicted noise levels associated with the proposed project is 55 dBA Ldn which is below the 65 dBA criteria established in the current CUP. The Noise Analysis also states that the proposed project’s operational noise levels are predicted to be at a similar level or below the ambient noise levels currently experienced at the receptor location from traffic noise on the local and regional roadway network, but could potentially be audible and distinguishable from transportation noise at times.

Existing ambient noise levels generated by the local and regional transportation network (I-80, Ophir Road, and Lazonos Road) at the noise-sensitive receptor nearest the project would be similar to, or slightly elevated in comparison to those documented at noise monitoring locations which documented a day/night noise level of approximately 58 dBA Ldn and average hourly noise levels of approximately 53 to 61 dBA Leq and 61 to 62 dBA Lmax. The notes from Placer County General Plan, Table 9-1 allow for the specifications to be raised to be equivalent to that of the ambient level. Application of this rationale would raise the noise level threshold at the nearest noise-sensitive receptor to 58 dBA Ldn. The predicted noise levels associated with the proposed project (54.8 dBA Ldn) would be below the 58 dBA Ldn “ambient level” threshold of Placer County General Plan, Table 9-1. Therefore, noise levels generated from mining operations are predicted to be below the current ambient noise levels, as such, the impacts for operational noise are considered less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

#### Discussion Item XIII-2:

The proposed project would result in the continuation of the mining operation that already occurs onsite. The primary vibration-generating activities associated with the proposed project occur during mining and material processing; however this is not expected to increase with mining continuing and expanding onsite. Therefore this is a less than significant impact. No mitigation measures are required.

#### Discussion Item XIII-3:

Since the project site is not located in an area for which an Airport Land Use Plan has been prepared, and no public or private airfields are within two miles of the project site, the proposed project would not be exposed to adverse levels of noise due to aircraft overflight. Therefore, there is no impact.

#### XIV. POPULATION & HOUSING – Would the project:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (i.e., by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (e.g., through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? (PLN)				X
2. Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? (PLN)				X

#### Discussion Item XIV-1:

The proposed project is to continue and expand the existing mining operation onsite and would not induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area. Therefore, there is no impact.

#### Discussion Item XIV-2:

The proposed project would not displace existing housing. The project involves the continuation and expansion of the existing mining operation onsite. Therefore, there is no impact.

**XV. PUBLIC SERVICES** – Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, 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 public services?

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Fire protection? (ESD, PLN)			X	
2. Sheriff protection? (ESD, PLN)				X
3. Schools? (ESD, PLN)				X
4. Parks? (PLN)				X
5. Other public facilities? (ESD, PLN)				X
6. Maintenance of public facilities, including roads? (ESD, PLN)			X	

**Discussion Item XV-1:**

The Newcastle Fire Protection District provides fire protection services to the project area. This servicing fire district has reviewed the proposed project. The proposed project does not generate the need for new, significant fire protection facilities as part of this project. Therefore, this impact is less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**Discussion Item XV-2, 3, 4:**

The Placer County Sheriff's Department provides police protection services to the project area, and the project is within Newcastle Elementary School District and Placer Union High School District. The project proposes to continue and expand the existing mining operation onsite. This would not result in an adverse effect to Sheriff protection facilities, schools, or park facilities, or other public facilities. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item XV-5:**

Placer County Water Agency (PCWA) has facilities that run along the northern boundary of the project property outside of the proposed disturbance area associated with the proposed expanded mining area. Currently, the owner has access to 11 miners' inches of water from PCWA and uses a portion of this allotment for dust control. The project is not expected to impact PCWA and its facilities. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item XV-6:**

The proposed project would continue and expand the existing mining operation onsite with haul truck and general site ingress/egress from Ophir Road, a County-maintained road. The Placer County Department of Public Works is responsible for maintaining County roads that access the parcel. The proposed project would not generate any more impacts on the maintenance of the public roads than what was anticipated with the development of the Placer County General Plan. Therefore, the impact is less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**XVI. RECREATION:**

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. 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? (PLN)				X
2. 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?				X

(PLN)				
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**Discussion Item XVI-1, 2:**

As an industrial project, the project is not expected to result in significant impacts to recreational facilities. The proposed project does not include recreational facilities nor require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse impact on the environment. Therefore, there is no impact.

**XVII. TRANSPORTATION – Would the project:**

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Conflict with a program, plan, ordinance or policy, except LOS (Level of Service) addressing the circulation system (i.e., transit, roadway, bicycle, pedestrian facilities, etc.)? (ESD)			X	
2. Substantially increase hazards to vehicle safety due to geometric design features (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? (ESD)			X	
3. Result in inadequate emergency access or access to nearby uses? (ESD)			X	
4. Result in insufficient parking capacity on-site or off-site? (ESD, PLN)			X	
5. Would the project result in VMT (Vehicle Miles Traveled) which exceeds an applicable threshold of significance, except as provided in CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b)? (PLN)			X	

**Discussion Item XVII-1:**

The proposed project would not significantly conflict with any existing policies or preclude anticipated future policies, plans or programs supporting the circulation system. The proposed design/improvements do not significantly impact the construction of bus turnouts, bicycle racks, planned roadway, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities. Therefore, this impact is less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**Discussion Item XVII-2:**

The Parcel is accessed from the existing County road, Ophir Road. The existing encroachment onto Ophir Road was constructed to County standards for the proposed Parcel. There will be no changes in operations or material distribution; therefore there will be no new effects to the roadway network. No mitigation measures are required.

**Discussion Item XVII-3:**

The servicing fire district has reviewed the proposed project and has not identified any significant impacts to emergency access. The proposed project does not significantly impact the access to any nearby use. Therefore, this is less than significant impact. No mitigation measures are required.

**Discussion Item XVII-4:**

The proposed project would not require any additional on-site staff. Therefore, no additional parking is required. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item XVII-5:**

In 2018, the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency promulgated and certified CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 to implement Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(2). Public Resources Code Section 21099(b)(2) states that, "upon certification of the guidelines by the Secretary of the Natural Resources Agency pursuant to this section, automobile delay, as described solely by level of service or similar measures of vehicular capacity or traffic congestion shall not be considered a significant impact on the environment pursuant to this division, except in locations

specifically identified in the guidelines, if any.”

In response to PRC 21099(b)(2), CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 notes that “Generally, vehicle miles traveled is the most appropriate measure of transportation impacts.” As of July 1, 2020, the requirement to analyze transportation impacts in CEQA using Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) went into effect. The proposed project includes the expansion of an existing mining operation into an additional 4.2 acres over the next 20 years. Daily operations, including the number of employees, haul trips, and other operational characteristics will not change from existing conditions and there will be no increase in VMT; therefore, no VMT analysis is warranted and the project’s impacts associated with VMT are considered less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**XVIII. TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES** – 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:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. 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 (PLN)		X		
2. 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 Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe. (PLN)		X		

**Discussion Item XVIII-1:**

A Cultural Resources Inventory was prepared for the project site by Dudek in December 2019. The potential for presence of cultural resources on the project site was determined through a records search and pedestrian survey. The records search identified that specific information is on file with the NAHC indicating the presence of sacred sites that may be affected by the proposed project. This is related to a historical area tunnel of the South Canal which runs approximately 140 below the ultimate base of the mining operations. Tribal consultation did not identify any particular resources but did add a mitigation measure addressing inadvertent discoveries. In addition, no resources were found during the December 2019 field survey, however, there remains the potential to encounter unidentified resources during project grading activities in areas of previously-undisturbed soil. Therefore, implementation of standard cultural resource construction mitigation measures ensure that this impact is less than significant.

**Mitigation Measures Item XVIII-1:**

MM V.1 and MM V.2

**Discussion Item XVIII-2:**

On June 9, 2020, Placer County contacted four Native American tribes that requested notification of proposed projects within this geographic area pursuant to the statutory requirements of Assembly Bill 52. During consultation the United Auburn Indian Community of the Auburn Rancheria (UAIC) requested a mitigation measure addressing inadvertent discoveries. The UAIC closed consultation on June 25, 2020 with the inclusion of this mitigation measure. At the time of preparation of this Initial Study, no other tribes have contacted the County. Implementation of the following mitigation measure would reduce impacts to tribal cultural resources to a less than significant level.

**Mitigation Measures Item XVIII-2:**

MM V.1 and MM V.2

**XIX. UTILITIES & SERVICE SYSTEMS** – Would the project:

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. 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? (EH, ESD, PLN)			X	
2. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? (EH)			X	
3. 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? (EH, ESD)			X	
4. 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? (EH)			X	
5. Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? (EH)			X	

**Discussion Item XIX-1, 3:**

Storm water would be collected and conveyed in the existing drainage facilities. No downstream drainage facility or property owner would be significantly impacted by any minimal increase in surface runoff. No new significant storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities is required.

The proposed project would not utilize private septic systems for the method of sewage disposal. Therefore, there would be no significant increase in new or expanded wastewater systems/treatment or water systems.

The project does not require any significant relocation or construction of electric, gas, or telecommunication facilities that would cause significant environmental effects.

Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant. No mitigation measures are required.

**Discussion Item XIX-2:**

The proposed project would not utilize existing wells or a public water system for domestic water. Therefore there would be no significant increase in new or expanded water systems. The project would not result in the construction of new treatment facilities or create an expansion of an existing facility. No mitigation measures are proposed.

**Discussion Item XIX-4, 5:**

The project would be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs. No mitigation measures are proposed.

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

Environmental Issue	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Measures	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
1. Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? (PLN)				X
2. 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? (PLN)			X	
3. Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) the construction or operation of which may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment? (PLN)				X
4. Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding, mudslides, or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes? (PLN)				X

Placer County Fire provides fire prevention, fire suppression, and life safety services to the Newcastle area. The project site is located in an area that is classified as Local Responsibility Area – Moderate risk for wildland fires. Classification of a zone as moderate, high or very high fire hazard is based on a combination of how a fire will behave and the probability of flames and embers threatening buildings. The area's topography, type, and amount of fuel, climate, and the availability of water for firefighting are the primary factors influencing the degree of fire risk. Under dry, windy conditions, fires can spread rapidly unless immediately addressed by fire services. Direct fire vehicle access to the site would be available via Lozanos Road and Ophir Road.

**Discussion Item XX-1:**

Continued operation and expansion of the existing mining operation would not substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. All mining activities and equipment areas would not be permitted to obstruct the travel lanes of the public roads surrounding and serving the site. The proposed project would not involve the closure of any roadways that would be an important evacuation route in the event of a wildfire. Therefore, there is no impact.

**Discussion Item XX-2:**

Properties north, south, east and west of the project site are rural farm properties. The proposed project would not exacerbate wildfire risks due to slope, prevailing winds, or other factors because mining operations occur in areas that have been cleared of flammable vegetation. The project site is improved with paved access able to accommodate fire engine ingress and egress, furthermore, bulldozers and other similar equipment stored onsite could be used to suppress wildfire if it were to occur. The project site is not located within an area of high or very high Fire Hazard Severity for the Local Responsibility Area nor does it contain any areas of moderate, high, or very high Fire Hazard Severity for the State Responsibility Area. Therefore, there is a less than significant impact. No mitigation measures are required.

**Discussion Item XX-3, 4:** The existing roads in the area would not change. No off-site improvements would be required. Also due to the location of the project site's distance from a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, it does not appear that it would exacerbate wildfire risks; it does not require installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure that could exacerbate fire risks; and it would not expose people or structures to significant risks from downstream flooding, landslides, slope instability or drainage changes. Therefore, there is no impact.

**F. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE:**

Environmental Issue	Yes	No
1. 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2. 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3. Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**G. OTHER RESPONSIBLE AND TRUSTEE AGENCIES** whose approval is required:


<input type="checkbox"/> California Department of Fish and Wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/> Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO)
<input type="checkbox"/> California Department of Forestry	<input type="checkbox"/> National Marine Fisheries Service
<input type="checkbox"/> California Department of Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
<input type="checkbox"/> California Department of Toxic Substances	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> California Department of Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
<input type="checkbox"/> California Integrated Waste Management Board	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> California Regional Water Quality Control Board	<input type="checkbox"/>

**H. DETERMINATION** – The Environmental Review Committee finds that:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A <b>MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION</b> will be prepared.
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**I. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW COMMITTEE** (Persons/Departments consulted):

Planning Services Division, Patrick Dobbs, Chairperson  
 Planning Services Division-Air Quality, Angel Green  
 Engineering and Surveying Division, Eric Griffin  
 Department of Public Works-Transportation, Stephanie Holloway  
 DPW-Environmental Engineering Division, Sarah Gillmore, P.E.  
 Flood Control and Water Conservation District, Brad Brewer  
 DPW- Parks Division, Ted Rel  
 HHS-Environmental Health Services, Joseph Scarbrough  
 Placer County Fire Planning/CDF, Dave Bookout / Jeff Hoag

Signature  Date 09/07/21  
 Leigh Chavez, Environmental Coordinator

**J. SUPPORTING INFORMATION SOURCES:** The following public documents were utilized and site-specific studies prepared to evaluate in detail the effects or impacts associated with the project. This information is available for public review, Monday through Friday, 8am to 5pm, at the Placer County Community Development Resource Agency, Environmental Coordination Services, 3091 County Center Drive, Auburn, CA 95603.

<b>County Documents</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Pollution Control District Rules & Regulations
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Plan

	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Review Ordinance	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> General Plan	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grading Ordinance	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Development Manual	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Land Division Ordinance	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stormwater Management Manual	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tree Ordinance	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Trustee Agency Documents</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> Department of Toxic Substances Control
<b>Site-Specific Studies</b>	Planning Services Division	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Study
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources Pedestrian Survey
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources Records Search
		<input type="checkbox"/> Lighting & Photometric Plan
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paleontological Survey
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tree Survey & Arborist Report
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Visual Impact Analysis
		<input type="checkbox"/> Wetland Delineation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acoustical Analysis
		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Engineering & Surveying Division, Flood Control District	<input type="checkbox"/> Phasing Plan
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Grading Plan
		<input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Geotechnical Report
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Drainage Report
		<input type="checkbox"/> Stormwater & Surface Water Quality BMP Plan
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> West Placer Storm Water Quality Design Manual
		<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic Study
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sewer Pipeline Capacity Analysis
		<input type="checkbox"/> Placer County Commercial/Industrial Waste Survey (where public sewer is available)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Sewer Master Plan
		<input type="checkbox"/> Utility Plan
		<input type="checkbox"/> Tentative Map
		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Environmental Health Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Groundwater Contamination Report
		<input type="checkbox"/> Hydro-Geological Study
		<input type="checkbox"/> Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
		<input type="checkbox"/> Soils Screening
		<input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary Endangerment Assessment
		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Planning Services Division, Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> CALINE4 Carbon Monoxide Analysis
		<input type="checkbox"/> Construction Emission & Dust Control Plan
		<input type="checkbox"/> Geotechnical Report (for naturally occurring asbestos)
		<input type="checkbox"/> Health Risk Assessment
		<input type="checkbox"/> CalEEMod Model Output

		<input type="checkbox"/>
	Fire Department	<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Response and/or Evacuation Plan
		<input type="checkbox"/> Traffic & Circulation Plan
		<input type="checkbox"/>

## Exhibit A: Mitigation Monitoring Plan

## EXHIBIT A

### MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM

#### Mitigated Negative Declaration – PLN20-00016

#### Robinson Newcastle Gravel Pit CUP Modification and 2020 Renewal

Section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code requires all public agencies to establish monitoring or reporting procedures for mitigation measures adopted as a condition of project approval in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. Monitoring of such mitigation measures may extend through project permitting, construction, and project operations, as necessary.

Said monitoring shall be accomplished by the county's standard mitigation monitoring program and/or a project specific mitigation reporting program as defined in Placer County Code Chapter 18.28, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program.

#### Standard Mitigation Monitoring Program (pre-project implementation):

The following mitigation monitoring program (and following project specific reporting plan, when required) shall be utilized by Placer County to implement Public Resources Code Section 21081.6. Mitigation measures adopted for discretionary projects must be included as conditions of approval for that project. Compliance with conditions of approval is monitored by the county through a variety of permit processes as described below. The issuance of any of these permits or County actions which must be preceded by a verification that certain conditions of approval/mitigation measures have been met, shall serve as the required monitoring of those condition of approval/mitigation measures. These actions include design review approval, improvement plan approval, improvement construction inspection, encroachment permit, recordation of a final map, acceptance of subdivision improvements as complete, building permit approval, and/or certification of occupancy.

The following mitigation measures, identified in the Robinson Newcastle Gravel Pit CUP Modification and 2020 Renewal Negative Declaration, have been adopted as conditions of approval on the project's discretionary permit and will be monitored according to the above Standard Mitigation Monitoring Program verification process:

Mitigation #	Text	Date Satisfied
<u>MM III.1</u>	<p>Construction</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Suspend all grading operations when fugitive dusts exceed <i>District Rule 228 Fugitive Dust</i> limitations. An applicant representative, CARB-certified to perform Visible Emissions Evaluations (VEE), shall routinely evaluate compliance to Rule 228, Fugitive Dust. Fugitive dust is not to exceed 40% opacity and not go beyond property boundary at any time.</li><li>2. Construction equipment exhaust emissions shall not exceed District Rule 202 <i>Visible Emission</i> limitations.</li><li>3. Minimize idling time to five minutes for all diesel power equipment.</li><li>4. Apply water to control dusts as needed to prevent dust impacts off-site.</li><li>5. Wash all trucks and equipment leaving the site.</li><li>6. Reduce traffic speeds on all unpaved surfaces to 15 miles per hour or less.</li></ol> <p>Emissions are also regulated Permit to Operate (RBSN-50-01) which includes a number of conditions designed to ensure that project emissions do not exceed PCAPCD permit thresholds.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The plant manager shall notify the District (per Rule 404) of any upset conditions, breakdown or scheduled maintenance which cause emissions in excess of limits established by District Rules and Regulations.</li></ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The plant manager shall report any changes in operation schedule or process to the District immediately.</li> <li>• All conveying, transferring and storage operations shall use water mist nozzles installed to effectively control fugitive dust emissions. The water spray nozzles shall be used at all times during the conveying and transfer.</li> <li>• If necessary, a chemical surfactive system shall be installed on all sprinkler systems to reduce water surface tension and improve control effectiveness.</li> <li>• All service roads and plan roads shall be maintained to prevent fugitive dust emissions, as prescribed by the Air Pollution Control Officer.</li> <li>• If necessary, a chemical surfactant or dust palliative shall be applied daily to all service roads and plant grounds, as prescribed by the Air Pollution Control Officer.</li> <li>• Emission opacity as dark or darker than Ringelmann No. 1 (20 percent opacity) for a period or periods aggregating more than (3) minutes in any one hour is prohibited and is in violation of District Rule 202, Visible Emissions.</li> <li>• The plant manager shall comply with the Title V Operating Limitations as specified in the Permit to Operate (RBSN-50-01).</li> </ul> <p>Additionally, the project would be required to comply with the State's diesel regulations regarding the tier level of heavy equipment. Recommendations from the PCAPCD regarding diesel-powered heavy equipment are included in Mitigation Measures MM III.2, MM III.3, MM III.4, and MM III.5 to help reduce overall impacts of the project regarding criteria pollutants. With the PCAPCD Permit to Operate in place which would incorporate the proposed area of operations, and with the following recommended Mitigation Measures to reduce the amount of criteria pollutants generated by the project, air quality impacts are anticipated to be less than significant.</p>	
<u>MM III.2</u>	Alternatives to open burning of vegetative material shall be used to dispose of site-cleared vegetation where feasible. Among suitable alternatives are chipping, mulching, or conversion to biomass fuel.	
<u>MM III.3</u>	Grid power shall be used (as opposed to diesel generators) for job site power needs where feasible.	
<u>MM III.4</u>	Mobile heavy equipment shall meet State engine-tier standards in effect at the time of operation.	
<u>MM III.5</u>	Heavy equipment idling times shall be minimized either by shutting equipment off when not in use or reducing the maximum idling time to 5 minutes as feasible, and all heavy equipment shall also be maintained and properly tuned in accordance with manufacturer's specifications.	
<u>MM IV.1</u>	Prior to Grading/Improvement Plan approval and prior to each phase of construction, a focused pre-construction survey shall be conducted by a qualified biologist during the evident and identifiable bloom period for all previously described species that have the potential to occur onsite. The pre-construction surveys shall occur in May of each year for all new areas to be disturbed and mined to cover all of four of the species that have potential to occur. If any of the special-status plant species are identified within	

	<p>areas of potential construction disturbance, they shall be avoided. If the plants cannot be avoided, the plants and/or the seedbank shall be transported to a suitable habitat near the project site. If transplantation/relocation is required, a qualified botanist shall prepare an avoidance and mitigation plan detailing protection and avoidance measures, transplanting procedures, success criteria, and long-term monitoring protocols. In addition, a pre-construction worker awareness training shall be conducted alerting workers to the presence of and protections for special-status plants. A note to this effect shall be included on the Notes page of the project's Grading/Improvement Plans.</p>	
<u>MM IV.2</u>	<p>All vegetation clearing including removal of trees and shrubs should be completed according to the approved phasing plan for the project and shall occur between September 1 and January 31, if feasible.</p> <p>If vegetation removal and grading activities begin during the nesting season (February 1 to August 31), a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction survey of the project area to identify any active nests for each phase of expansion. Additionally, the surrounding 500 feet of the project footprint shall be surveyed for active raptor nests, where accessible. The pre-construction survey shall be conducted within 3 days prior to commencement of ground-disturbing activities. If the pre-construction survey shows that there is no evidence of active nests, a letter report shall be prepared and submitted to the Planning Services Division to document the results survey, and no additional measures are recommended. If construction does not commence within 3 days of the pre-construction survey, or halts for more than 7 days, an additional survey is required prior to starting work.</p> <p>If nests are found and considered to be active, the project biologist shall establish species-specific buffer zones to prohibit construction activities and minimize nest disturbance until the young have successfully fledged or until the biologist determines that the nest is no longer active. Buffer width will depend on the species in question, surrounding existing sources of disturbance, and specific site characteristics, but may range from 20 feet for some songbirds to 250 feet for most raptors provided the County has concurred (with input from CDFW if deemed warranted) that these buffer ranges are adequate. If active nests are found within any trees slated for removal, then an appropriate buffer shall be established around the trees and the trees shall not be removed until a biologist determines that the nestlings have successfully fledged or the nest has been determined to be inactive. A note to this effect shall be included on the Notes page of the project's Grading/Improvement Plans.</p>	
<u>MM IV.3</u>	<p>A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey for roosting bats within 7 days prior to clearing or grading operations and removal of trees or rock outcrops for each phase of construction/expansion. This can be done in conjunction with a nesting bird survey. If no bats are observed, a letter report shall be prepared to document the results of the survey, and no additional mitigation measures are recommended. If construction does not commence within 7 days of the pre-construction survey, or halts for more than 7 days, an additional survey is required prior to</p>	

	<p>starting work.</p> <p>If bats are determined to be roosting on or within 100 feet of the project area, then the biologist shall establish an appropriate buffer around the roost site in coordination with CDFW. In addition, a pre-construction worker awareness training shall be conducted alerting workers to the presence of and protections for various bat species. If bat species are found to be roosting in the project area, the project proponent shall coordinate with CDFW to determine appropriate additional mitigation measures which may include, but not necessarily limited to, staging tree removal activities over a two-day period to relocate the roosting bats or installing bat boxes or other alternate roost structures. Evidence of successful completion of additional mitigation measures, if required, shall be provided to the County.</p>	
<u>MM IV.4</u>	<p>Prior to initiation of construction activities, all construction personnel shall participate in a worker environmental training program that will educate workers regarding the special-status plant and wildlife species with the potential to occur on the project site, the need to avoid impacts, state and federal protection, and the legal implications of violating environmental laws and regulations. At a minimum this training may be accomplished through tailgate presentations at the project site and the distribution of informational brochures, with descriptions of sensitive biological resources and regulatory protections, to construction personnel prior to initiation of construction work.</p>	
<u>MM IV.5</u>	<p>Prior to Grading/Improvement Plan approval, oak woodland impacts and significant trees identified for removal, and/or trees with disturbance to the critical root zone, shall be mitigated as follows:</p> <p>A) The applicant shall mitigate for the loss of oak woodlands through one, or a combination of the following, subject to Planning Services Division approval, consistent with the requirements of Public Resources Code (CEQA) Section 21083.4:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Submit payment of fees to the Placer County Tree Preservation Fund for oak woodland conservation at a 2:1 ratio (based on acreage) consistent with Chapter 19.50.090 (C) Placer County Woodland Conservation Ordinance - Replacement Programs and Penalties. These fees shall be calculated based upon the current market value to preserve and maintain in perpetuity similar oak woodland acreage.</li> <li>ii. Purchase and recordation of off-site conservation easements at a 2:1 ratio (based on acreage) at an in-county location approved by Placer County to mitigate the loss of oak woodlands.</li> <li>iii. Provide for a combination of payment to the Tree Preservation Fund and recordation of an off-site conservation easement for oak woodlands.</li> <li>iv. Restore or enhance an oak woodland through the planting, monitoring and maintenance of an appropriate number of trees in a former oak woodland. Restoration or enhancement is limited</li> </ol>	

	<p>to half the mitigation requirement. The balance of the mitigation requirement must be satisfied by in-perpetuity conservation through compliance with other measures in this section. Restoration or enhancement includes preparation of an oak woodland management plan defining maintenance, monitoring, and reporting responsibilities to ensure long-term survivability of the plantings. The oak woodland management plan is subject to Planning Services Division approval.</p> <p>B) The applicant shall mitigate for the loss of significant trees (i.e. single trunk trees within the project impact area that are greater than 24 inches diameter at breast height (DBH) or clumps greater than 72 inches in circumference at ground level) at an inch for inch basis. Compensatory mitigation shall consist of payment of a mitigation fee into the Placer County Tree Preservation Fund at a rate of \$125 per DBH of significant trees removed or impacted.</p> <p>Although oak woodland impacts and significant tree removal will be phased, all approved tree removal mitigation fees shall be paid prior to Grading/Improvement Plan approval.</p>	
MM IV.6	<p>The Grading/Improvement Plans shall include the following note and shall show placement of <u>temporary construction fencing as follows</u>: The applicant shall install a four foot tall, brightly colored (usually yellow or orange), synthetic mesh material construction fence (or an equivalent approved by the Development Review Committee) along the project phasing boundary shown in Figure 2, above, prior to any construction equipment being moved on-site or any construction activities taking place for each phase. No site disturbance shall be allowed until this condition is satisfied and temporary fencing shall not be altered during construction. No grading, clearing, storage of equipment or machinery, etc., may occur until a representative of the DRC has inspected and approved all temporary construction fencing.</p> <p>The Grading/Improvement Plans shall also include a note and show placement of <u>permanent boundary fencing</u> with signage at the extent of the approved mining area boundary. Prior to commencement of the fifth phase of the project of the project (Year 17-20) the applicant shall install a four foot tall permanent fence (or an equivalent approved by the Development Review Committee) along the mining expansion perimeter where trees have been identified to remain prior to any fifth phase grading or vegetation removal activities taking place. No disturbance outside the active phased mining expansion area shall be allowed. Any encroachment into future project phase areas, including critical root zones of trees to be saved, must first be approved by the Development Review Committee. Permanent fencing shall not be altered during construction without written approval of the Development Review Committee. Grading and clearing for the project's fifth phase may not occur until a representative of the Development Review Committee has inspected and approved all permanent fencing. Permanent fencing can be removed with mine site reclamation.</p>	

MM V.1	<p>All employees should be alerted to the potential to encounter archaeological material. In the event that cultural resources (sites, features, or artifacts) are exposed during work activities for the proposed Project, all ground disturbing work occurring within 100 feet of the find shall immediately stop until a qualified specialist, meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards, can evaluate the significance of the find and determine whether additional study is warranted. Prehistoric archaeological deposits may be indicated by the presence of discolored or dark soil, fire-affected material, concentrations of fragmented or whole freshwater bivalves shell, burned or complete bone, non-local lithic materials, or the characteristic observed to be atypical of the surrounding area. Common prehistoric artifacts may include modified or battered lithic materials; lithic or bone tools that appeared to have been used for chopping, drilling, or grinding; projectile points; fired clay ceramics or non-functional items; and other items. Historic-age deposits are often indicated by the presence of glass bottles and shards, ceramic material, building or domestic refuse, ferrous metal, or old features such as concrete foundations or privies. Depending upon the significance of the find under CEQA (14 CCR 15064.5(f); PRC Section 21082), the archaeologist may simply record the find and allow work to continue. If the discovery proves significant under CEQA, additional work, such as preparation of an archaeological treatment plan, testing, or data recovery may be warranted.</p>	
MM V.2	<p>If potential tribal cultural resources (TCRs), archaeological resources, other cultural resources, articulated, or disarticulated human remains are discovered during construction activities, all work shall cease within 100 feet of the find (based on the apparent distribution of cultural resources). Examples of potential cultural materials include midden soil, artifacts, chipped stone, exotic (non-native) rock, or unusual amounts of baked clay, shell, or bone.</p> <p>A qualified cultural resources specialist and Native American Representative from the traditionally and culturally affiliated Native American Tribe(s) will assess the significance of the find and make recommendations for further evaluation and treatment as necessary. Culturally appropriate treatment that preserves or restores the cultural character and integrity of a Tribal Cultural Resource may be, but is not limited to, processing materials for reburial, minimizing handling of cultural objects, leaving objects in place within the landscape, construction monitoring of further construction activities by Tribal representatives of the traditionally and culturally affiliated Native American Tribe, and/or returning objects to a location within the project area where they will not be subject to future impacts. The United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC) does not consider curation of TCRs to be appropriate or respectful and requests that materials not be permanently curated, unless specifically requested by the Tribe.</p> <p>If articulated or disarticulated human remains are discovered during construction activities, the County Coroner and Native American Heritage Commission shall be contacted immediately. Upon determination by the County Coroner that the find is Native American in origin, the Native American Heritage Commission will assign the Most Likely Descendant(s) who will work with the project</p>	

	<p>proponent to define appropriate treatment and disposition of the burials.</p> <p>Following a review of the find and consultation with appropriate experts, the authority to proceed may be accompanied by the addition of development requirements which provide for protection of the site and/or additional measures necessary to address the unique or sensitive nature of the site. The treatment recommendations made by the cultural resource specialist and the Native American Representative will be documented in the project record. Any recommendations made by these experts that are not implemented, must be documented and explained in the project record. Work in the area(s) of the cultural resource discovery may only proceed after authorization is granted by the Placer County Community Development Resource Agency following coordination with cultural resources experts and tribal representatives as appropriate.</p>	
<u>MM VII.1</u>	A monitoring report shall be submitted to ESD by the applicant's representative prior to October 1 of each year of operation of the pit. The report shall discuss ongoing mitigation for erosion control, drainage, revegetation, and slope stability and specify any additional measures that need to be implemented prior to the onset of the rainy season.	
<u>MM VII.2</u>	Final cut slopes shall be no steeper than 2:1 (horizontal:vertical) as recommended by Joslin Geotechnical in their slope stability analysis report dated January 19, 2020.	
<u>MM X.1</u>	The applicant shall maintain the existing settling pond to trap silt and sedimentation that is generated on the site to preclude said material from exiting or escaping the site.	
<u>MM X.2</u>	<p>This project is located within the area covered by Placer County's municipal stormwater quality permit, pursuant to the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II program. Project-related stormwater discharges are subject to all applicable requirements of said permit. BMPs shall be designed to mitigate (minimize, infiltrate, filter, or treat) stormwater runoff in accordance with "Attachment 4" of Placer County's NPDES Municipal Stormwater Permit (State Water Resources Control Board NPDES General Permit No. CAS000004).</p> <p>Water quality Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be designed according to the California Stormwater Quality Association Stormwater Best Management Practice Handbooks for Construction, for New Development / Redevelopment, and/or for Industrial and Commercial, (and/or other similar source as approved by the Engineering and Surveying Department (ESD)). The project owner shall maintain all BMPs as required to ensure effectiveness.</p>	

**Project-Specific Reporting Plan (post-project implementation):**

The reporting plan component is intended to provide for on-going monitoring after project construction to ensure mitigation measures shall remain effective for a designated period of time. Said reporting plans shall contain all components identified in Chapter 18.28.050 of the County Code, Environmental Review Ordinance – "Contents of Project-Specific Reporting Plan."