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**COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO**  
**PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**  
**NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

**NOVEMBER 9, 2022**

**TO: ALL INTERESTED PARTIES**

**SUBJECT: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR WHITE ROCK NORTH MINE (PLNP2021-00216)**

Sacramento County will be the CEQA Lead Agency for preparation of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a project known as White Rock North Mine. This Notice of Preparation has been sent to responsible and trustee agencies and involved federal agencies pursuant to Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines. Agencies should comment on the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to the agencies' statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. The project description, location, and the probable environmental effects are contained in the attached materials and may also be viewed online at:

<https://planningdocuments.saccounty.net/ViewProjectDetails.aspx?ControlNum=PLNP2021-00216>

Please send your Agency's response to this Notice to:

Joelle Inman, Environmental Coordinator  
Department of Community Development, Planning and Environmental Review  
827 7<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 225, Sacramento, CA 95814

or via e-mail at: [CEQA@saccounty.net](mailto:CEQA@saccounty.net).

Your response should include the name of a contact person in your agency.

Two scoping meetings will be conducted in association with this project; one will be tailored for the general public and one will be tailored for other agencies.

- The public meeting will take place at 6pm on Wednesday, November 30, 2022; the zoom link is here: <https://saccounty-net.zoomgov.com/j/1613668678>
- The agency meeting will take place at 10am on Thursday, December 1, 2022; the zoom link is here: <https://saccounty-net.zoomgov.com/j/1609292045>

Specific questions about the project should be directed to Julie Newton, Project Manager, at (916) 876-8502 or [newtonj@saccounty.gov](mailto:newtonj@saccounty.gov) for further information.

**PROJECT TITLE: WHITE ROCK NORTH MINE (PROJECT)**

**CONTROL NUMBER: PLNP2021-00216**

**PROJECT PROPONENT: GRANITE CONSTRUCTION CO (GRANITE)**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION:**

The Project consists of a request for a Special Planning Area (SPA) Implementation Permit to allow aggregate mining on a 2,125± acre portion of the Aerojet Rocketdyne, Inc. ("Aerojet") campus in unincorporated Sacramento County, California. The Project is located between Folsom Boulevard (to the north) and White Rock Road (to the south) and will be accessible from the intersection of White Rock Road and Nimbus Road (see Plate 1: Project Location and Plate 2: Project Site). As part of the Project, Granite proposes to mine and transport up to 25 million tons of sand and gravel over a period of approximately 20 years. Granite proposes a production limit of 3 million tons per year for aggregate mining.

For transport of mined materials, Granite proposes an off-site conveyor connection to the existing, separately permitted Grantline aggregate processing plant operated by Teichert (see Plate 3, Conveyor Connection). To facilitate this connection, a conveyor undercrossing would be developed by Teichert at White Rock Road. The Project includes land use and reclamation permitting for the portion of the conveyor on Aerojet property and the undercrossing at White Rock Road. However, any construction permitting for the portion of the conveyor connection south of White Rock Road would be separately addressed by Teichert.

The proposed surface mining uses are permitted in the Aerojet SPA (Sacramento County Ordinance No. SZC 95-0014, Zoning Code Section 508-300 *et. seq.*) and the Aerojet SPA Implementation Agreement Regarding Surface Mining (adopted by Resolution No. 2006-1180 dated August 29, 2006), subject to performance standards that include approval of a SPA Implementation Permit and Reclamation Plan.

**Entitlements:**

The Project will require the following Sacramento County entitlements:

- A **SPA Implementation Permit** to allow surface mining and reclamation on 2,125± acres for a period of 20 years, with an additional 3 years to complete reclamation. The Applicant requests the ability to mine and transport up to 3 million tons per year, with an average anticipated production of 1.25 million tons per year. Pursuant to Section 1A of the SPA Implementation Agreement, the SPA Implementation Permit will incorporate the mining plan, serve as the vehicle for imposing conditions, be subject to CEQA review, and be reviewed by the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.
- A **Reclamation Plan** to return the land to its current undeveloped condition, which is readily adaptable to future uses allowed under the Aerojet SPA.
- A **Work Authorization Permit** prior to commencement of any surface mining activities.
- A **Use Permit** for a 1± acre off-site conveyor connection and undercrossing at White Rock Road to transport mined materials to the existing, separately permitted off-site Teichert Grantline

processing plant. Any permitting for the portion of the conveyor connection south of White Rock Road would be separately addressed by Teichert, if needed.

- A **Development Agreement** between the Applicant and the County of Sacramento.
- An **Encroachment Permit** and **Improvement Plans** as needed to allow installation of a conveyor undercrossing and driveway improvements along White Rock Road.

#### **ENVIRONMENTAL/LAND USE SETTING:**

The majority of the Project boundary consists of lands that were historically mined for gold by dredge mining. Gold dredge mining generally consists of extracting gold from sand, gravel, and dirt using water and mechanical methods and resulted in dredge tailings. At the project site, the tailings from the dredge mining operation created a complex landscape of linear cobble piles up to approximately 40 feet tall interspersed with ravines and basins. Located throughout the dredge tailings are the testing facilities for Aerojet, many of which have been decommissioned or closed. In addition, within these ravines and basins there are numerous native oak trees, as well as other native and non-native trees.

The predominant land uses in the general vicinity of the Project are aggregate mining, industrial, and open space. Separate mines operated by Granite and Teichert (subject to separate reclamation entitlements) are located to the south and east of the site. A material transport and aggregate crushing and construction material recycling business operated by G&R Trucking is located to the south of the site. Aerojet's industrial and commercial operations are scattered throughout the Project boundary and its surroundings. The closest existing residential community is located approximately 3,800 feet to the northeast of the Project boundary across US Highway 50. Other residential communities have been approved for development in proximity to the Project, including the Glenborough, Easton Place, and Rio del Oro Specific Plans. These areas may develop during the life of the Project.

#### **PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS/EIR FOCUS:**

The analysis in the EIR will describe existing conditions, describe the legal and regulatory framework relevant to the Project, describe standards of significance to be used in analysis, and describe analysis methodologies. A high-level review of the Project and of the environmental resources in the study area has resulted in the identification of potential categories of environmental effect. The descriptions below are not exhaustive, and other sections and discussions may be included if further research indicates that their inclusion is warranted. As the analyses progress and the extent of impacts to the categories is determined, appropriate CEQA alternatives will be included for analysis.

#### **AESTHETICS**

The proposed project will be altering the existing landscape by removing or re-grading existing tailings piles which would change the visible massing of the area. In addition, a conveyer system will be constructed that will transport aggregate from the project area under White Rock Road and connect to the existing conveyer system operated by Teichert. Mining operations are to occur during daytime hours; however, it is possible that nighttime operations may be necessary, which would use portable light towers. The analysis will characterize existing visual resources at the project site and vicinity, including the potential for nighttime operation along with any scenic vistas or scenic resources that are potentially affected by project implementation. Construction/mining activities would result in permanent aesthetic changes; the EIR will discuss the significance of the Project to post project aesthetic conditions.

**AIRPORTS**

The Project is within the Mather Airfield Policy Planning Area (APPA), and a portion of the project site is within the 60 dB noise contour of the airfield. The EIR will discuss the APPA and the potential for impacts to airport operations and safety.

**AIR QUALITY**

Project-related emissions may include toxic air contaminants, ozone precursors, and particulates. The analysis will include discussions of emissions resulting from construction, mining, and reclamation-related activities, as well as the potential for substantial odors associated with project emissions.

**BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

The Project will be analyzed to identify areas where proposed mining activities may affect biological resources. The analysis will discuss impacts to general wildlife populations and habitats, but will focus on special-status species, native and non-native trees, and particularly sensitive habitats, including wetlands. The Project will also be analyzed to determine if it would conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) or other approved local, regional, State or federal plan for the conservation of habitat.

**GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS**

Project-related greenhouse gas emissions will be quantified and analyzed for the cumulative impacts to climate change. The EIR analysis will further address the project's consistency with applicable plans, including the County's Climate Action Plan, and policies related to reducing greenhouse gases and criteria pollutants.

**CULTURAL RESOURCES**

A cultural resources evaluation will be prepared to determine if there are any archeological or historic resources onsite and the EIR will evaluate potential impacts on any identified cultural resources.

**GEOLOGY AND SOILS**

The Project has the potential to result in geological and soil impacts during the life of the mining operations. The EIR will analyze these potential impacts and identify all applicable mitigation measures.

**HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS**

The area of the project site is within the Aerojet Superfund remediation project area. Specific areas that contain hazardous materials sites will be identified in the vicinity of the proposed excavation area. Project compatibility with any existing hazardous materials sites will be examined. In addition, potential mining-related impacts of the Project regarding the potential spill of hazardous materials will also be examined.

**HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY**

Areas of potential flooding will be identified and drainage patterns will be examined within the watersheds affected by the Project. The Project will be analyzed for impacts to the existing hydrologic

environment, in particular how the Project would impact the hydrologic environment surrounding the creek that crosses the project site. Agencies involved with flood control issues will be consulted. These may include, but are not limited to the California State Department of Water Resources, the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB), the Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency (SAFCA), and the Sacramento County Department of Water Resources. The potential impacts of the Project on water quality will also be examined, which includes mining-related impacts (e.g., erosion of exposed soil).

## **LAND USE**

Within the context of the Aerojet SPA, the Project will be examined to determine consistency with land use policies/ordinances/plans that have been adopted in order to avoid environmental effects. The Project's impact relative to the planned and existing land use environment will also be disclosed.

## **MINERAL RESOURCES**

The area of the proposed Project is within the County's mineral resource zone, and there are active mines located to the south of the project. The EIR will discuss the potential impacts of the proposed Project on the availability of a known mineral resources.

## **NOISE AND VIBRATION**

The Project has the potential to expose the public to increased noise levels and vibration during the life of the mine. The EIR will estimate noise and vibration impacts associated with the mining operations and include all feasible mitigation to reduce environmental impacts associated with noise and vibration.

## **PUBLIC UTILITIES**

The EIR will analyze whether the operation of the mine, including site preparation and reclamation, would overextend existing utility facilities. While the proposed Project would not develop land uses such as residential uses that would increase demand on water or energy services, water used for dust control and energy use to power the conveyor systems will be discussed and will determine if such use is significant.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

Though the project would not result in an increase in population that would result in additional Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) during operation, the EIR would analyze the impacts of the Project on VMT in compliance with Senate Bill 743 due to the movement of construction equipment, mining equipment, materials, and workers to the project site. As proposed, the Project would transport aggregate via conveyor to the Teichert processing plant on Grantline Road. It is anticipated that the level of truck traffic will remain approximately the same. The EIR will also analyze the potential impact to emergency access and circulation due to the potential shifting of truck traffic related to use of a conveyor.

## **TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES**

A cultural resources evaluation will be prepared to determine if there are any tribal cultural resources onsite. In addition, AB 52 consultation has been initiated by the County. The EIR will evaluate potential impacts on any identified or potentially undiscovered tribal cultural resources.

**WILDFIRE**

The Project site includes areas that are wooded, along with areas of open grassland and scrub. These areas are susceptible to wildfire. The EIR will discuss the potential of the Project to increase the risk of accidental wildfire ignition during mining operations.

**TOPIC EXCLUDED FROM FURTHER ANALYSIS IN THE EIR:****AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY RESOURCES**

The proposed Project would not convert any Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland to developed uses, and would not encroach on any other protected resource lands such as those under Williamson Act contracts. Thus, the proposed Project would not result in a potentially significant impact on agricultural resources, and this topic will not be addressed in the EIR. The Project area does not contain zoning districts designated for forest or timberland, and while the project site does contain wooded areas that can be identified as woodlands the project site does not contain commercial forest lands or timberland. Therefore, the proposed Project would not conflict with forestland zoning or result in the loss or conversion of forestland to non-forest uses and would result in no impacts to these resources. This topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

**POPULATION AND HOUSING**

The proposed Project is not expected induce any direct unplanned population growth as the Project does not include any proposed residential land uses. Additionally, the proposed Project is not expected to displace any people or housing. Therefore, this topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

**PUBLIC SERVICES**

The Project does not propose the construction of residential land uses that would increase population in the area and therefore would not increase demand on existing libraries, schools, parks, and police and fire services. This topic will not be addressed in the EIR.

**INTENDED USES OF THE EIR:**

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on those projects (Pub. Res. Code 21000 et seq.). CEQA also requires that each public agency mitigate or avoid, wherever feasible, the significant environmental effects of projects it approves or implements.

The Board of Supervisors will use the information contained in the EIR to consider the environmental effects, mitigation measures, and alternatives of the proposed project in the process of rendering a decision to approve or deny the requested entitlements. The EIR will serve as an informational document for the general public and directly affected property owners as well. Agencies, such as the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the California Regional Water Quality Control Board, the California State Mining and Geology Board, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, and the United States Army Corps of Engineers may also use the EIR for planning/permitting purposes.



# Plate-1: Project Location

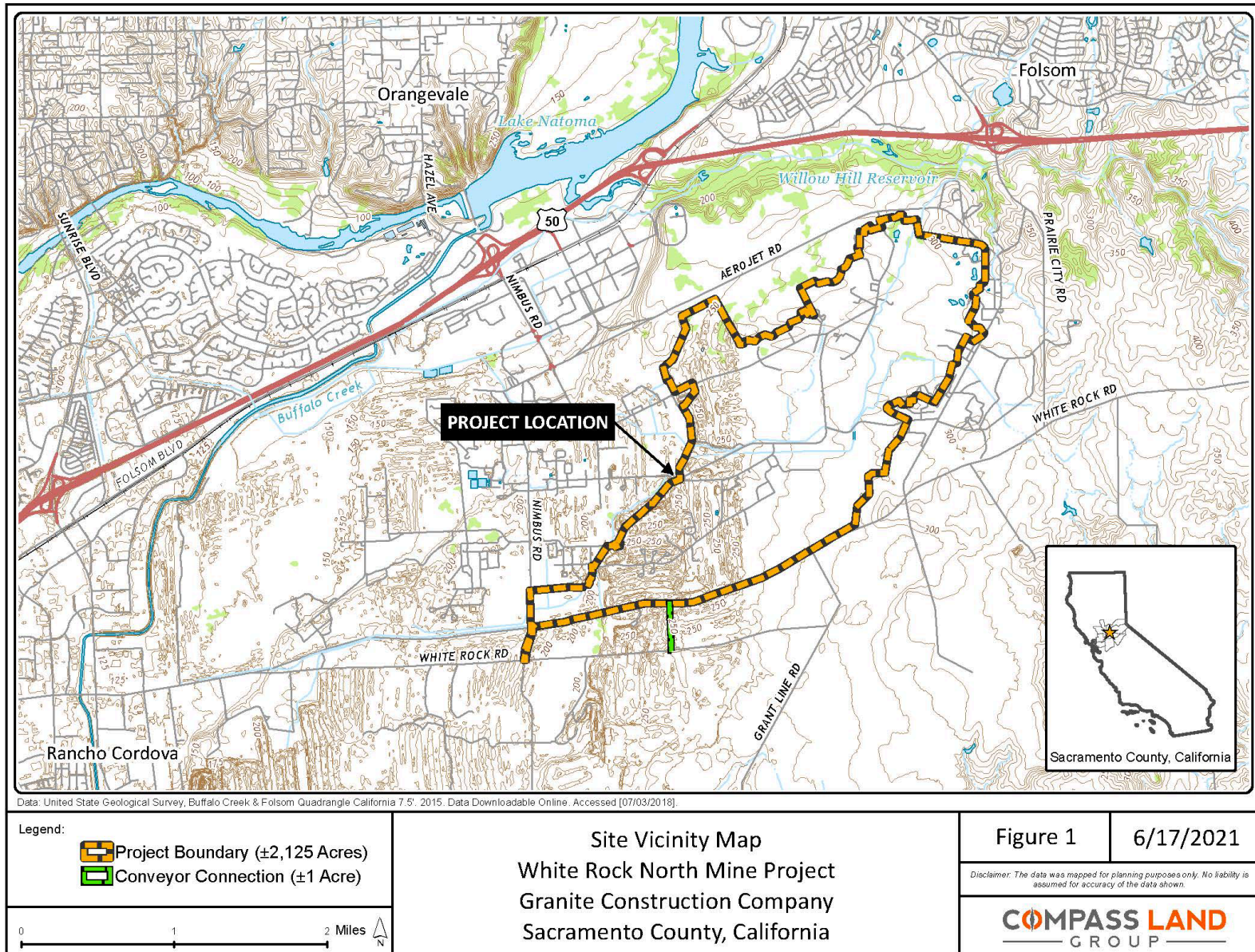
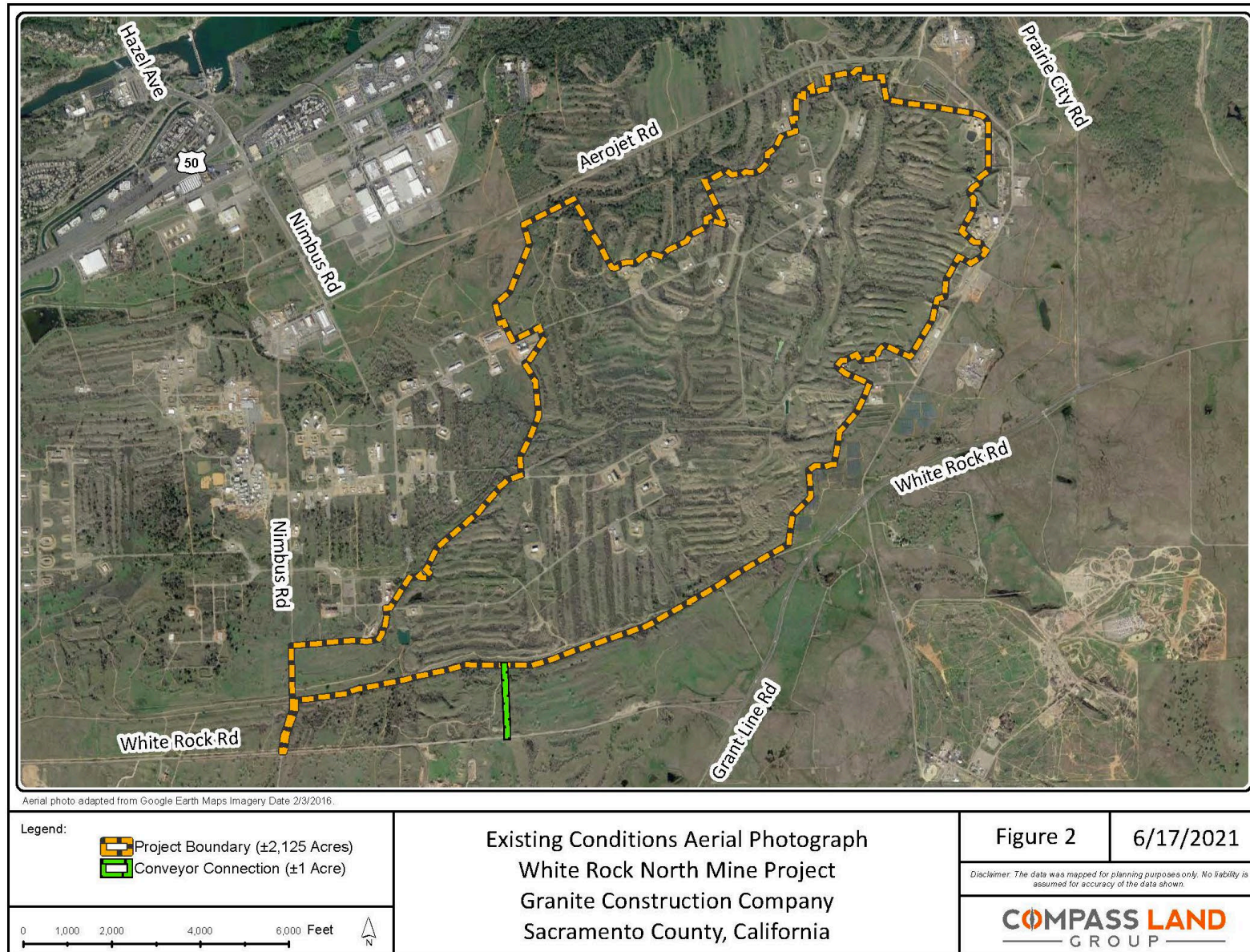




Plate -2: Project Site





### Plate 3 Conveyor Connection

