



RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Carolyn Syms Luna
Director

1:30 P.M.

SEPTEMBER 16, 2013

AGENDA

RIVERSIDE COUNTY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
DIRECTOR'S HEARING
DESERT PERMIT ASSISTANCE CENTER
77588 El Duna Court
Palm Desert, CA 92211

NOTE: Please be aware that the indicated staff recommendation shown below for each item may differ from that presented to the Planning Director during the public hearing.

If you wish to speak, please complete a "SPEAKER IDENTIFICATION FORM" and give it to the Planning Director. The purpose of the public hearing is to allow interested parties to express their concerns. Please do not repeat information already given. If you have no additional information, but wish to be on record, simply give your name and address and state that you agree with the previous speaker(s).

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if any accommodations are needed, please contact Mary Stark at (951) 955-7436 or E-mail at mcstark@rctlma.org. Request should be made at least 48 hours or as soon as possible prior to the scheduled meeting.

1.0 CONSENT CALENDAR:

1.1 **NONE**

2.0 PUBLIC HEARINGS: 1:30 p.m. or as soon as possible thereafter.

2.1 **RECLAMATION PLAN NO. 161, REVISED NO. 1** – Intent to Adopt a Mitigated Negative Declaration – Applicant: Palo Verde Irrigation District – Fourth/Fourth Supervisorial District – Location: BLM Land North of Blythe, North of US Hwy 95, East of Midland Road, South of Big Maria Mountains – 48 Gross Acres - Zoning: Natural Assets (N-A), - **REQUEST:** RCL00161R1 proposes to expand the existing mining operation located on BLM land from the existing approx. 14.3 to approx. 29.4 acres, mining of approx. 1.99 million cubic yards of material, and provide for 37 years of mining operations (expires in 2047). Continued from August 12, 2013. Project Planner, David Jones at (951) 955-6863 or email dljones@rctlma.org. (Quasi-judicial)

3.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS:

FINAL 08-29-13

Agenda Item No.: 2.1
Area Plan: Palo Verde Valley
Zoning Area: Chuckawalla Area
Supervisory District: Fourth
Project Planner: David L. Jones
Director's Hearing: September 16, 2013

Reclamation Plan No. 161 Revised Permit No. 1
Environmental Assessment No. 42215
Applicant: Palo Verde Irrigation District
Engineer/Representative: Palo Verde Irrigation District

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF REPORT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION:

This revision proposes to expand the existing mining operation from approximately 14.3 acres to approximately 29.3 acres increasing the mineable approved aggregate reserves to approximately 1.99 million cubic yards and to provide for 37 years of mining operations (expiring in 2050).

The project site is located on Federal Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land north of US Highway 95, east of Midland Road and south of Big Maria Mountains. See vicinity map. The total acreage of the site is approximately 600 gross acres.

FURTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

August 19, 2013

RCL00161R1 was continued from the August 12, 2013 Desert-Director's Hearing at the request of the applicant in an effort to revisit the Conditions of Approval (conditions) that have been placed on the project. The applicant was in disagreement with a number of the conditions and wanted the opportunity to meet with the necessary County Agencies in order to discuss the conditions further. Since the August 12, 2013 hearing, staff has received a comment package, dated August 8, 2013, from a member of the public that has been included in this staff report package.

ISSUES OF POTENTIAL CONCERN:

Background: The subject site has a history of mining activity. The existing operation, The Palo Verde Irrigation District's North Gravel Pit, was originally approved in September 2001 for the mining of approximately 14.3 acres. The project is located on BLM land; however, the County is operating as the Lead Agency pursuant to the State Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975 and the Memorandum of Understanding between the California Department of Conservation State Mining & Geology Board and the Bureau of Land Management, CA. The minerals contract governing mineral extraction will be administered by the BLM. All SMARA requirements will be administered by the County.

As a result of increasing the mined area to approximately 29.3 acres as proposed under this revised permit, the associated Environmental Assessment identified three resources that may have incurred significant impacts were it not for the incorporation of various mitigation measures. These three resources (Biological Resources, Cultural Resources and Mineral Resources) have all been identified as Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated, as described below.

Due to the fact that the project area has the potential to support desert tortoise and that one special status species (Alverson's foxtail cactus) was identified onsite, the project was identified as potentially having an adverse effect on an endangered or threatened species as well as potentially having an adverse effect on a species identified as a special status species in a local or regional plan policy or regulation or by the state. However, through mitigation and monitoring measures, potential adverse impacts to Biological Resources would be reduced to less than significant levels.

In relation to Cultural Resources, potentially adverse impacts were identified for Paleontological Resources as the mining operation could cause direct impacts to surficial and buried fossil-containing resources due to ground-disturbing activities, if not avoided. However, through mitigation and monitoring measures, these potential adverse impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Mineral Resources were also identified as potentially being adversely impacted as the project would have the potential to expose people or property to hazards from the existing mine and proposed expansion. However, through mitigation and monitoring measures, these potential adverse impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

1. Existing General Plan Land Use (Ex. #5): Open Space- Rural (OS-RUR)
2. Surrounding General Plan Land Use (Ex. #5): Open Space- Rural to the north, south, east and west of the site.
3. Existing Zoning (Ex. #2): Natural Assets (N-A)
4. Surrounding Zoning (Ex. #2): Natural Assets to the north and east; Natural Assets and Controlled Development Areas, 10 Acre Minimum Lot Size to the west and Rural Residential to the south.
5. Existing Land Use (Ex. #1): Mining Operation
6. Surrounding Land Use (Ex. #1): Vacant land to the north, east and west; Agricultural uses to the south.
7. Project Data:
Subject Site's Total Acreage: 600 acres
Total Proposed Lots: One
Proposed Min. Lot Size: N/A
Schedule: N/A
8. Environmental Concerns: See attached environmental assessment No. 42215

RECOMMENDATIONS:

ADOPTION of a **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** for **ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT NO. 42215**, based on the findings incorporated in the initial study and the conclusion that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment; and,

APPROVAL of **RECLAMATION PLAN NO. 161, REVISED PERMIT NO. 1** subject to the attached conditions of approval, and based upon the findings and conclusions incorporated in the staff report.

CONCLUSIONS:

1. The proposed project is in conformance with the Open Space- Rural (OS-RUR) Land Use Designation, and with all other elements of the Riverside County General Plan.
2. The proposed project is consistent with the Natural Assets (N-A) Zoning classification of Ordinance No. 348, and with all other applicable provisions of Ordinance No. 348.

3. The public's health, safety, and general welfare are protected through project design.
4. The proposed project is clearly compatible with the present and future logical development of the area.
5. The proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment.
6. The proposed project will not preclude reserve design for the Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (WRCMSHCP).

FINDINGS: The following findings are in addition to those incorporated in the summary of findings and in the attached environmental assessment, which is incorporated herein by reference.

1. The project site is designated Open Space- Rural (OS-RUR) within the Palo Verde Valley Area Plan.
2. The proposed use, a mining operation, is permitted use in the Natural Assets (N-A) designation.
3. The proposed use, a mining operation, is consistent with the Open Space-Rural (OS-RUR) designation.
4. The project site is surrounded by properties which are designated Open Space-Rural (OS-RUR) and Agriculture (AG).
5. The zoning for the subject site is Natural Assets (N-A).
6. The proposed use, a mining operation, is a permitted use in the N-A Zone provided the operator thereof holds a permit to conduct surface mining operations issued pursuant to County Ordinance No. 555 which has not been revoked or suspended.
7. The proposed use, a mining operation, is consistent with the development standards set forth in the Natural Assets (N-A) Zone.
8. The project site is surrounded by properties which are zoned Natural Assets (N-A), Controlled Development Areas, 10 Acre Minimum (W-2-10) and Rural Residential (RR).
9. Environmental Assessment No. 42215 did not identify any potentially significant impacts that could not be mitigated to less than significant levels.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

1. As of this writing, no letters, in support or opposition of the project have been received.
2. The project site is not located within:
 - a. A High Fire area;
 - b. A 100-year flood plain, an area drainage plan, or dam inundation area;
 - c. A Parks and Recreation District

- d. The City of Blythe Sphere of Influence
 - e. Area Drainage Plan
 - f. Dam Inundation Area
3. The project site is located within:
 - a. An area where liquefaction potential is Low to Very High.
 4. The subject site is currently designated as Assessor's Parcel Number 815-131-003.
 5. The project was filed with the Planning Department on September 22, 2009.
 6. This project was reviewed by the Land Development Committee (LDC) at the regular LDC meeting held on December 15, 2011.
 7. Deposit Based Fees charged for this project, as of the time of staff report preparation, total \$37,766.62

August 8, 2013

Rebuttal to presented EAIS and call for EIR

Page 2-Section 3 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The check boxes for AESTHETICS, AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES and HYDROLOGY/WATER QUALITY should be checked.

A.-AESTHETICS-The mountain ridge that has been mined at the front is ugly for over two miles down highway 95 towards town and is still visible up to a quarter mile from the mountain range.

B.-AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES-Contrary to the EAIS, there is a small forest on the east side of the quarry that will be destroyed if the new boundaries are used.

C.-HYDROLOGY/WATER QUALITY-The Hydrology at this site is lousy and will be worse if the new boundaries are used. Especially if at the end of the mining when they try to return it to a natural state, which is required.

Page 3-Section 4 DETERMINATION

The check box for a mandatory EIR should be checked. The mine site is in a potentially sensitive historic and natural wildlife area that must be preserved.

Page 5-Section 1, part a & b AESTHETICS

Rebuttal to part a-The mountain ridge that has been mined at the front is ugly for over two miles down highway 95 towards town and is still visible up to a quarter mile from the mountain range. Furthermore upon climbing just the first bluff of the mesa, less than a quarter mile from the highway 95, and the mined mountain front was completely visible approx. 2 miles away.

Rebuttal to part b-The damage to scenic resources, forest, rock out-croppings, and unique landmark features will result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site that is open to the public eye not only from the highway, but as a recreational trail.

FINDINGS OF FACTS-The underlined sentences on this pages FoF are wrong. The upper slope can be seen to 6th Ave, 3 miles away from the first bluff and is severely NOT like the surrounding slopes. The mountain is dark grey and brown, while the mined slope is stark white. Furthermore the mined slope is still visible within a quarter mile from the bluff of the mesa.

Page 6-Section 3 OTHER LIGHTING ISSUES

The lights at this mining area have been severely unbearable to anyone within 3 miles of it. I live over 2 miles away and the mining that occurs there is like a lighthouse beacon until after midnight on many occasions. Mitigation should include blinders on the work lights to direct them only into the quarry area.

Page 7-Section 5c FOREST

There is a small forest in the east side stream bed that if mining occurred in the manner presented would cause its destruction either from direct mining or loss of the regularly directed flow.

Page 8 & 9-Section 7a-g BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Mining at this site, especially near the east side streambed would cause the destruction of a small forested area and important rock out-croppings on the east of the streambed and most important a seasonal meadow that supports small birds, eagles and numerous other wildlife including deer, coyote and bobcat. I myself have seen coyote and found evidence (tracks and droppings) of all these creatures in this area and know that it is extremely important for their survival. If you realize that these mountains are somewhat arid, yet these creatures still live there and because this forested area is one of the only places that hold water for them and support vegetation, then it is the number one area around for them to exist.

In the FoF part a- It states it is not located within the boundaries of a Habitat Conservation Plan, yet the Marias Mts. are a protected Federal Wilderness area.

In Part d- It quotes biological documentation, yet I am wondering if any kind of wildlife study has been done at all recently to determine the population of animals that benefit from this one area alone.

Part e- States the west side streambed doesn't flow onto the site. Yes true, especially due to an ugly wall of boulders that directs stream run-off, that if this site is to be reclaimed to its natural state must be removed. This would allow run-off from the west side stream bed to enter the quarry area thus increasing the size of the forested area.

Part f- States the soil types are not consistent with pools or habitat, yet there is definitely a seasonal pool and year-round habitat there, regardless of the fact that no Fairy-Shrimp were found.

Part g- Local policies have nothing to do with Federally protected habitat environments.

My Finding of Facts are that there is still much mitigation to be done concerning the preservation of the small forested area, the directing of run-off to preserve the seasonal pool and to take into account the fact that wildlife exists there and must be accounted for through all steps of the operation as well as determining a path to natural reclamation without any evidence of man's presence.

Page 10-Section 8, part a & b-CULTURAL RESOURCES, Historic Resources

In the northern section of the east side of the outlined mine area, next to the streambed, there is a dirt roadbed that was created during World War 2 as part of Patton's tank training ground. The track is quite clear and is a reminder of the sacrifice this country made during those times. But also this track runs directly parallel with the noted Bouse formation that is described in Section 10 as requiring investigation from a State Paleontologist.

Page 15-Section 16a-17a-GEOLOGICAL HAZARDS/SLOPES

The real problem here is that without proper grading and re-inforcement of canyon opening in the west side quarry area, the run-off from the streambeds especially down the west side canyon will sustain increased water flow from the east side streambed when the quarry site is reclaimed. Because water flow from the east side will run across the quarry area and out the west side streambed. Also the streambeds themselves on both sides of the quarry must remain untouched by excavation because of the streambeds on both sides have pristine rock out-croppings.

Page 16--Section 18a-19a-SOILS/EROSION

SAME AS ABOVE-FoF of this section will not hold up in the final scenario of site reclamation, because both streambeds should be graded to converge into the center of the quarry area and to the east side streambed to create a large pond area that will contain run-off from both streams.

Page 20-Section 25 a&d-HYDROLOGY/WATER

SAME AS ABOVE

Page 21-Section 26a-d-FLOODPLAINS

SAME AS ABOVE

Page 22-Section 28b-PLANNING

Incompatible with the designation of protected Federal Wilderness area of the surrounding Marias Mts.

Page 23-Section 29a-b-MINERAL RESOURCES

The Crawford Mine directly south of this mine has already been shut down by the EPA for over-mining and now due to that fact is trying to re-start this mine. The loss of mineral resources from the mining in this area is cruel and staggering. Both these mines should be shut down to secure resources for future generations, not just the here and now.

Page 28-Section 42-RECREATIONAL TRAILS

This area is classified a Federal Wilderness Recreational Area by the United States Government and must be treated as such. With proper access given to anyone wishing to gain entry to any of the canyons located around this quarry for the purpose of hiking and scenic enjoyment.

Page 32-Section 51, 52, 53-MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

This is an aggregate rock quarry with seasonal streambeds on both sides and good possibility of severe flash flooding in monsoon and winter times. The streambed along Area A is a pristine wildlife area with native trees, bushes and grass preserved by the existence of an older cement retention dam of approx. 30' high by 30' wide. On the other side between the west side of the quarry and Area D is another streambed feed by two separate canyons convening at the top of the existing quarry with one containing a pristine solid rock falls that is dangerously close to the mining operation.

Comments: If Area B is removed, Area C exposed machined quarry mountain slope will be more exposed by approx. 100 feet more than is currently exposed to Highway 95 and 2nd, 4th and 6th St.'s within three miles away. Creating a permanent ugly scarified surface for the public.

Along west side of Area B is possible historic WWII staging area. And in the southwest corner, in the streambed are unusual pristine rock formations and also in the east side of the east streambed. One major problem with the machining away of Area B is that the streambed along Area A would lose run-off through Area B and the pristine wildlife area along Area A could be destroyed from loss of water retention. Because this area is dammed at Point E, which is necessary for water retention all along Area A, removal of Area B would cause all run-off to flow into the streambed onto the other side of the quarry and not only ruin one wildlife area, but cause this other canyon severe erosion and loss of habitat.

The answer to possibly all problems would be to follow the plan as outlined on the RIT map with mining into already disturbed Area D down to the present level of the existing quarry. The erosion considered because of the possible run-off from other areas could be curtailed by use of short piled rock boulder dams at either end of the mineable Area D of the kind that are already in use at this quarry area. Then to preserve Area B because of its historic and pristine appearance and so thereby reduce the mineable area in Area B to the area defined on the map.

The problem with mining in this quarry area is that they are dangerously close to pristine wildlife areas and natural mountain formations and they are severely over-mining in this quarry, referred to as 'PVID North Gravel Pit' and also to the quarry adjacent to it, referred to as 'PVID South Gravel Pit' or 'Crawford Mine'. Both these mines have been re-opened only in the past 2-3 years and have already been almost totally mined out. When these resources are gone there are no more areas for aggregate mining left. Because of their greed for revenue from this 'easy pickens' type of wholesale mines, the aggregate needed for future homes and buildings in Blythe will be sold off to the highest bidder and many of those bidders aren't even from the Blythe area. With all the rock and aggregate that has been removed from these mines recently who could say were the recipient is. But I do know that enough of it has been taken to build a dozen towns of Blythe and it is sad that this place will never benefit from it. Because it naturally belongs to those people who live here, and not in Desert Center or Indio or any other points beyond.

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM: INITIAL STUDY

Environmental Assessment (E.A.) Number: 42215
Project Case Type (s) and Number(s): Reclamation Plan No. 161, Revised Permit No. 1
Lead Agency Name: County of Riverside Planning Department
Address: P.O. Box 1409, Riverside, CA 92502-1409
Contact Person: David L. Jones
Telephone Number: 951-955-6863
Applicant's Name: Palo Verde Irrigation District
Applicant's Address: 180 West 14th Avenue, Blythe, CA 92225

I. PROJECT INFORMATION

A. **Project Description:** Reclamation Plan No. 161, Revision No. 1 (RCL00161R1) proposes to expand the existing mining operation located on BLM land from the existing approximately 14.3 acres to approximately 29.3 acres including mining of approximately 1.99 million cubic yards of material and to provide for 37 years of mining operations (expires 2050). The project site located on BLM land north of US Highway 95, east of Midland Road and south of Big Maria Mountains. The site is approximately 43 gross acres.

B. **Type of Project:** Site Specific ; Countywide ; Community ; Policy .

C. **Total Project Area:** 600 acres (Total Acreage of site)

Residential Acres: N/A	Lots: N/A	Units: N/A	Projected No. of Residents: N/A
Commercial Acres: N/A	Lots: N/A	Sq. Ft. of Bldg. Area: N/A	Est. No. of Employees: N/A
Industrial Acres: N/A	Lots: N/A	Sq. Ft. of Bldg. Area: N/A	Est. No. of Employees: N/A
Other: 29.3			

D. **Assessor's Parcel No(s):** 815-131-003

E. **Street References:** North of US Highway 95, east of Midland Road and south of Big Maria Mountains.

F. **Section, Township & Range Description or reference/attach a Legal Description:**
Section 27, Township 5 South, Range 23 East

G. **Brief description of the existing environmental setting of the project site and its surroundings:** The subject site is a 600 acre fairly flat and barren parcel. The site contains very little vegetation and a mining operation currently exists on-site. The current mining operation covers approximately 14.3 acres of the parcel. The areas surrounding the subject site are barren as well with the exception of existing agricultural uses to the south of the subject site.

II. APPLICABLE GENERAL PLAN AND ZONING REGULATIONS

WRONG!

A. General Plan Elements/Policies:

1. **Land Use:** LU 20.2, LU 20.3, LU 20.4 and LU 21.1
2. **Circulation:** N/A

3. Multipurpose Open Space: OS 14.1, OS 14.2, OS 14.4

4. Safety: N/A

5. Noise: N/A

6. Housing: N/A

7. Air Quality: AQ 1.4 and AQ 4.10

B. General Plan Area Plan(s): Palo Verde Valley

C. Foundation Component(s): Open Space

D. Land Use Designation(s): Rural

E. Overlay(s), if any: N/A

F. Policy Area(s), if any: N/A

G. Adjacent and Surrounding:

1. Area Plan(s): Palo Verde Valley

2. Foundation Component(s): Open Space and Agriculture

3. Land Use Designation(s): Rural and Agriculture

4. Overlay(s), if any: N/A

5. Policy Area(s), if any: N/A

H. Adopted Specific Plan Information

1. Name and Number of Specific Plan, if any: N/A

2. Specific Plan Planning Area, and Policies, if any: N/A

I. Existing Zoning: Natural Assets

J. Proposed Zoning, if any: N/A

K. Adjacent and Surrounding Zoning: Natural Assets, Controlled Development Areas, 10 Acre Minimum Lot Size, Rural Residential.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

The environmental factors checked below (x) would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

Aesthetics

Hazards & Hazardous Materials

Recreation

Agriculture & Forest Resources

Hydrology / Water Quality

Transportation / Traffic

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Quality | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use / Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities / Service Systems |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Geology / Soils | <input type="checkbox"/> Population / Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | |

IV. DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

A PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/NEGATIVE DECLARATION WAS NOT PREPARED

I find that the proposed project **COULD NOT** have a significant effect on the environment, and a **NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

I find that 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, described in this document, have been made or agreed to by the project proponent. A **MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION** will be prepared.

I find that the proposed project **MAY** have a significant effect on the environment, and an **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required.

A PREVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT/NEGATIVE DECLARATION WAS PREPARED

I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, **NO NEW ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION IS REQUIRED** because (a) all potentially significant effects of the proposed project have been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration pursuant to applicable legal standards, (b) all potentially significant effects of the proposed project have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, (c) the proposed project will not result in any new significant environmental effects not identified in the earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, (d) the proposed project will not substantially increase the severity of the environmental effects identified in the earlier EIR or Negative Declaration, (e) no considerably different mitigation measures have been identified and (f) no mitigation measures found infeasible have become feasible.

I find that although all potentially significant effects have been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or Negative Declaration pursuant to applicable legal standards, some changes or additions are necessary but none of the conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162 exist. An **ADDENDUM** to a previously-certified EIR or Negative Declaration has been prepared and will be considered by the approving body or bodies.

I find that at least one of the conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162 exist, but I further find that only minor additions or changes are necessary to make the previous EIR adequately apply to the project in the changed situation; therefore a **SUPPLEMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required that need only contain the information necessary to make the previous EIR adequate for the project as revised.

I find that at least one of the following conditions described in California Code of Regulations, Section 15162, exist and a **SUBSEQUENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT** is required: (1) Substantial changes are proposed in the project which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; (2) Substantial changes have occurred with respect to the circumstances under which the project is undertaken which will require major revisions of the previous EIR or negative declaration due to the involvement of new significant environmental effects or a substantial increase in the severity of previously identified significant effects; or (3) New information of substantial importance, which was not known and could not have been known with the exercise of reasonable diligence at the time the previous EIR was certified as complete or the negative declaration was adopted, shows any the following:(A) The project will have

V. ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES ASSESSMENT

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000-21178.1), this Initial Study has been prepared to analyze the proposed project to determine any potential significant impacts upon the environment that would result from construction and implementation of the project. In accordance with California Code of Regulations, Section 15063, this Initial Study is a preliminary analysis prepared by the Lead Agency, the County of Riverside, in consultation with other jurisdictional agencies, to determine whether a Negative Declaration, Mitigated Negative Declaration, or an Environmental Impact Report is required for the proposed project. The purpose of this Initial Study is to inform the decision-makers, affected agencies, and the public of potential environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed project.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
AESTHETICS Would the project				
1. Scenic Resources				
a) Have a substantial effect upon a scenic highway corridor within which it is located?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings and unique or landmark features; obstruct any prominent scenic vista or view open to the public; or result in the creation of an aesthetically offensive site open to public view?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Riverside County General Plan Figure C-9 "Scenic Highways"

Findings of Fact: a-b) U.S. Highway 95 is referenced in the Palo Verde Valley Area Plan as a County Eligible Scenic Highway. U.S. Highway 95 runs to the south of the subject site. From Highway 95, southerly of 2nd Avenue, the upper slope of the existing pit appears the same as the surrounding slopes. From Highway 95, northerly of 2nd Avenue, the upper slope of the pit cannot be seen since the bluff of the mesa obstructs the view and therefore preserving the scenic views that are visible from the highway. A significant impact would occur if the project caused a substantial change in the views of the area, or a permanent change to the views of the site.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required.

WRONG!

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required.

2. Mt. Palomar Observatory				
a) Interfere with the nighttime use of the Mt. Palomar Observatory, as protected through Riverside County Ordinance No. 655?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: GIS database, Ord. No. 655 (Regulating Light Pollution)

Findings of Fact: The subject site is located approximately 134.43 miles from the Mt. Palomar Observatory which is outside of the zones setforth in County Ordinance No. 655, Regulating Light Pollution. Ordinance No. 655 identifies areas of concern for the observatory as Zone A (within a 15

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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mile radius of the observatory) and Zone B (within a 45 mile radius of the observatory). No significant impact to the Mt. Palomar Observatory is anticipated.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

3. Other Lighting Issues

a) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Expose residential property to unacceptable light levels?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: On-site Inspection, Project Application Description

Findings of Fact: a-b) The project site is in a relatively undeveloped area with few light sources and residential uses. The hours of operation (Monday-Friday from 7 am to 6pm) for the mine that were established with the original approval of RCL00161 will remain ineffect. This revision does propose any new lighting sources; therefore, potential lighting impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

AGRICULTURE & FOREST RESOURCES Would the project

4. Agriculture

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing agricultural zoning, agricultural use or with land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Cause development of non-agricultural uses within 300 feet of agriculturally zoned property (Ordinance No. 625 "Right-to-Farm")?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: Riverside County General Plan Figure OS-2 "Agricultural Resources," GIS database, and Project Application Materials.

Findings of Fact: The subject site has not been identified as being located within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve, nor has the site been mapped or identified as farmland or as being located

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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within an agricultural zone. Therefore, the proposed project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to a non-agricultural use, nor would the proposal conflict with any existing agricultural zoning or land subject to a Williamson Act contract or land within a Riverside County Agricultural Preserve. As the proposed project is a revision to an existing surface mining permit, ground disturbance has already occurred at the site. No significant impacts to agriculture and forest resources are anticipated.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

5. Forest

a) 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 Govt. Code section 51104(g))?

b) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

Source: Riverside County General Plan Figure OS-3 "Parks, Forests and Recreation Areas," and Project Application Materials.

Findings of Fact: The subject site has not been mapped or identified as forest land, timberland or timberland zoned as Timberland Production. Therefore, the proposal would not conflict with the existing zoning of or cause the re-zoning of lands classified as forest, timberland or timberland zoned as Timberland Production. The proposal would not result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Lastly, the proposal does not involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of forest land to non-forest use. No significant impacts to forest land are anticipated.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

AIR QUALITY Would the project

6. Air Quality Impacts

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?

c) 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

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?				
d) Expose sensitive receptors which are located within 1 mile of the project site to project-substantial point source emissions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve the construction of a sensitive receptor located within one mile of an existing substantial point source emitter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: MDAQMD review, Project Application Materials

Findings of Fact: The subject site is located within the Mojave Desert Air Basin. Upon review of the proposal by MDAQMD, the district didn't identify any significant impacts that the project would create as it relates to air quality. However, the district did recommend the submission of an applicable permit application and the associated application and permit fees to the district. MDAQMD permits are renewed on an annual basis.

Mitigation: The applicant has been conditioned to submit the applicable permit application and associated fees to the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District and to renew the permit on an annual basis. The mining operation shall also comply with mining dust control provisions equivalent to MDAQMD's Rule 403.2.

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project

7. Wildlife & Vegetation

a) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state conservation plan?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any endangered, or threatened species, as listed in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations (Sections 670.2 or 670.5) or in Title 50, Code of Federal Regulations (Sections 17.11 or 17.12)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Wildlife Service?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service?				
f) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: GIS database, On-site inspection, and General Biological Report prepared by L&L Environmental, Inc.

Findings of Fact:

- a) The proposed project is not located within the boundaries of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state conservation plan.
- b) The project area has the potential to support desert tortoise. The current mine area is surrounded by desert tortoise exclusion fencing. A survey was conducted which included the planned area of mine expansion and an addition zone of influence in order to evaluate probability of impacts to tortoises. Based upon these results, probability of impact is low.
- c) One special status species was identified onsite, Alverson's foxtail cactus (*Coryphantha alversonii*).
- d) The biological documentation provided did not identify any impacts to the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or to established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or potential to impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.
- e) USGS mapped fresh water flows through the ephemeral streams that are present both east and west of the proposed mine expansion area. The mapped ephemeral drainage visible at the central western edge of the survey area presently flows along the west side of the project area and not onsite.
- f) Soil types are not consistent with an alkali playa or vernal pool complex and pools or depressions characteristic of vernal habitat were not noted as present on the subject property. No fairy shrimp or fairy shrimp habitat was observed during this study.
- g) The proposed project does not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources.

WRONG!

Mitigation:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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MM BIO-1 – Prior to expanding the mine, a clearance survey for desert tortoise shall be conducted just prior to extending the desert tortoise exclusion fencing that is now present. Following that survey and relocation and/or expansion of the fenced area, a second clearance survey within the entire fenced desert tortoise exclusion area should be performed in order to insure no tortoises were trapped inside the fencing during the active mine exclusion zone expansion procedure.

MM BIO-2 – During clearing of undisturbed areas, cactus species shall be transplanted and stored for later use during revegetation following the completion of mining activity.

Monitoring:

The following items shall be investigated by Riverside County Planning Department, Environmental Programs Division (EPD) staff during the annual inspection.

1. The entire length of the desert tortoise fence shall be inspected to ensure that it has not been compromised. Any damage to the fence shall be repaired immediately by the mine operator. If EPD staff determines that there was significant potential for tortoises to enter the site, due to the size of the damaged section of fence or the time that it has remained in disrepair, a desert tortoise clearance survey may be required. The mine operator should also be reminded that it is their responsibility to maintain the fence at all times throughout the year.
2. Ensure that the project is not impacting the drainages located east and west of the project footprint.

CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the project

8. Historic Resources

a) Alter or destroy an historic site?

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5?

Source: Project Application Materials, Riverside County Archaeologist review

WRONG!

Findings of Fact: a-b) The proposed project would not alter or destroy an historic site nor would the proposed project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

Mitigation: Planning Department Conditions of Approval 10.PLANNING.30 and 10.PLANNING.31 explains the necessary steps that the permit holder must take in the event that human remains or cultural resources are discovered during ground disturbing activities at the subject site.

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

9. Archaeological Resources

a) Alter or destroy an archaeological site.

b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to California Code of Regulations, Section 15064.5?				
c) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: Project Application Materials, Riverside County Archaeologist review

Findings of Fact: The subject site has not been identified as a known archaeological site nor has the proposal been identified to potentially cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource, disturb any human remains or restrict existing religious or sacred uses within the potential impact area. No significant impacts to archaeological resources are anticipated.

Mitigation: Planning Department Conditions of Approval 10.PLANNING.30 and 10.PLANNING.31 explains the necessary steps that the permit holder must take in the event that human remains or cultural resources are discovered during ground disturbing activities at the subject site.

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

WRONG!

10. Paleontological Resources

a) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource, or site, or unique geologic feature?

Source: Riverside County General Plan Figure OS-8 "Paleontological Sensitivity", PDP01414 - L&L Environmental, Inc., "Revised Paleontological Resources Assessment for the Proposed Palo Verde Irrigation District Blyth (sic) Mine Expansion Project, County of Riverside, California", dated October 15, 2010, Revised: August 23, 2012, September 25, 2012, December 7, 2012.

Findings of Fact: Mining of aggregate at the current quarry site could cause direct impacts to surficial and buried paleontological resources due to ground-disturbing activities, if not avoided. Impact to paleontological resources during mining operations would be considered adverse with moderate to high probability (area-wide) of long-term impact.

IMPORTANT!

Mitigation:

1. Planned excavation activities will avoid surface and buried paleontological resources in underlying Bouse Formation of high paleontological potential (BLM 2007, 2008); however, buried paleontological resources in the underlying Quaternary alluvium-Unit 3 deposits maybe (sic) impacted by ongoing mining operations.

2. The following mitigation measures have been developed for implementation in the event that either the Bouse Formation or the Quaternary alluvium-Unit 3 cannot be avoided during mining operations:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in ground subsidence?

Source: Riverside County General Plan Figure S-7 "Documented Subsidence Areas Map"

Findings of Fact: A portion of the site is mapped as being susceptible to subsidence (southern approximate half). However, the projects do not propose any structures.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

16. Other Geologic Hazards

a) Be subject to geologic hazards, such as seiche, mudflow, or volcanic hazard?

Source: Project Application Materials, Riverside County Geologist review

Findings of Fact: The subject site would not be subject to geologic hazards such as seiche, mudflow or volcanic hazard.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Mitigation Measures are required

17. Slopes

a) Change topography or ground surface relief features?

b) Create cut or fill slopes greater than 2:1 or higher than 10 feet?

c) Result in grading that affects or negates subsurface sewage disposal systems?

Source: Riv. Co. 800-Scale Slope Maps, Project Application Materials, Geoloigst's review.

Findings of Fact: The mining operation does not create a significant change to topography and ground surface relief. The project proposes to construct final reclamation slopes at a ration no steeper than three (3) feet horizontal to one (1) foot vertical (3:1). The mining will not affect or negate subsurface sewage disposal systems.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Mitigation Measures are required; however, as slope review is a required item on the State of California SMARA annual mine inspection form (MRRC-1) and as required pursuant to Conditions of Approval 10.PLANNING.4 and 10.PLANNING.22, slopes will be evaluated and reported annually to the County by the mine operator/permittee.

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
18. Soils				
a) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Section 1802.3.2 of the California Building Code (2007), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service Soil Surveys, Project Application Materials, On-site Inspection

Findings of Fact: The project is located in an area with minimal to no topsoil. The project is designed to minimize erosion through slope design, BMP's and overall pit design which contains all water within the site.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Mitigation Measures are required; however, as erosion review is a required item on the State of California SMARA annual mine inspection form (MRRC-1) and as required pursuant to Conditions of Approval 10.PLANNING.4, 10.PLANNING.22, and 10.PLANNING.34, slopes will be evaluated and reported annually to the County by the mine operator/permittee.

19. Erosion				
a) Change deposition, siltation, or erosion that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed of a lake?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in any increase in water erosion either on or off site?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: U.S.D.A. Soil Conservation Service Soil Surveys

Findings of Fact: There are a number of streams that traverse the subject site. However, the mining operation avoids these streams, provides a protective berm between the stream on the west side of the mine pit, provides adequate setback from the stream on the east side of the pit, and the project is designed to minimize erosion through slope design, BMP's and overall pit design which contains all water within the site.

?

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Mitigation Measures are required; however, as erosion review is a required item on the State of California SMARA annual mine inspection form (MRRC-1) and as required pursuant to Conditions of Approval 10.PLANNING.4, 10.PLANNING.22, and 10.PLANNING.34, slopes will be evaluated and reported annually to the County by the mine operator/permittee

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Mitigation: No mitigation measures are required

Monitoring: No monitoring measures are required

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the project

25. Water Quality Impacts

a) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?

b) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

c) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

d) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?

e) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area, as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?

f) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?

g) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?

h) Include new or retrofitted stormwater Treatment Control Best Management Practices (BMPs) (e.g. water quality treatment basins, constructed treatment wetlands), the operation of which could result in significant environmental effects (e.g. increased vectors or odors)?

Source: Riverside County Flood Control District Flood Hazard Report/Condition, Project application materials.

Findings of Fact: The existing gravel pit is located between two drainage washes, one along the Westerly edge of the existing mine and the other wash along the Easterly edge of the proposed expansion. During the fall and winter months, rainfall will sheet flow off the surrounding hillsides towards the existing washes. The design of the gravel pit does not allow for any off-site storm water to enter the pit from either wash and does not allow any storm water to flow out of the pit into either wash. As proposed, the project would expand the existing surface mining permit operation at the subject site. The expansion would not alter the existing drainage pattern of the site, violate any wastewater standards or requirements, impact groundwater supplies, create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide

WRONG!

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. The project does not propose any type of housing, nor does the project propose to construct or relocate any structures. The proposal would not substantially degrade water quality nor does it propose a new or retrofitted water quality treatment basins or treatment wetlands.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

26. Floodplains

Degree of Suitability in 100-Year Floodplains. As indicated below, the appropriate Degree of Suitability has been checked.

NA - Not Applicable U - Generally Unsuitable R - Restricted

a) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Changes in absorption rates or the rate and amount of surface runoff?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam (Dam Inundation Area)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: Riverside County General Plan Figure S-9 "100- and 500-Year Flood Hazard Zones," Figure S-10 "Dam Failure Inundation Zone," Riverside County Flood Control District Flood Hazard Report/Condition, GIS database

Findings of Fact: a-b) The subject site is not located within a Riverside County Flood District. Storm water flows created during a precipitation event are collected in the gravel pit and eventually soaks into the gravel. The gravel pit does not accept any off-site flows nor will any storm flows be discharged off-site. Review of the project by Riverside County Flood Control District indicates that a watershed of approximately 540-acres impacts along the westerly side of the site and any headcutting would not impact the upstream properties. This request does not appear increase the headcutting and therefore potential impacts related to flooding would be less than significant. The proposal would not substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site, change the rate and amount of surface runoff, expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding nor would the project change the amount of surface water in any water body.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

WRONG!

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

• LAND USE/PLANNING Would the project

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
27. Land Use				
a) Result in a substantial alteration of the present or planned land use of an area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Affect land use within a city sphere of influence and/or within adjacent city or county boundaries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: Riverside County General Plan, GIS database, Project Application Materials

Findings of Fact: a-b) The subject site is currently designated by the County General Plan as Open Space: Rural (OS: RUR) and designated by County Ordinance No. 348 as Natural Assets (N-A). The existing and proposed land uses are currently consistent with the existing designations as well as the planned use for the area. The site is located adjacent to the City of Blythe Sphere of Influence but is not located within the sphere's boundary.

Mitigation: No mitigation measures are required

Monitoring: No monitoring measures are required

28. Planning				
a) Be consistent with the site's existing or proposed zoning?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Be compatible with existing surrounding zoning?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Be compatible with existing and planned surrounding land uses?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be consistent with the land use designations and policies of the General Plan (including those of any applicable Specific Plan)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community (including a low-income or minority community)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Source: Riverside County General Plan Land Use Element, Staff review, GIS database

Findings of Fact: The subject site is currently designated by the Riverside County General Plan as Open Space: Rural (OS: RUR) and designated by County Ordinance No. 348 as Natural Assets (N-A). The existing and proposed land uses are currently consistent with the existing designations, the planned use for the area as well as General Plan policies. The proposal is consistent with existing surrounding zoning as the surrounding zones allow similar uses as well. The project will not disrupt or divide the physical arrangement of an established community.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

WRONG!

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

MINERAL RESOURCES Would the project

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
29. Mineral Resources				
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or the residents of the State?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Be an incompatible land use located adjacent to a State classified or designated area or existing surface mine?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose people or property to hazards from proposed, existing or abandoned quarries or mines?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Source: Riverside County General Plan Figure OS-5 "Mineral Resources Area"

Findings of Fact: This site is located in an area classified as MRZ-4 (Areas of no known mineral occurrence). The site has not been designated as being of regional or statewide significance relative to mineral resources. The project is a surface mine which results in the beneficial use of the aggregates at this site. The mining operation is governed under SMARA and, thus, inspected by the County mine inspector a minimum of one time per year to confirm the mine's operational status and condition; and, the mining operation is also required to maintain adequate financial assurance for reclamation of the mine site.

IMPORTANT!

Mitigation: Pursuant to SMARA requirements and Conditions of Approval 20.PLANNING.1 and 10.BS GRADE.3, financial assurance for reclaiming the surface mine shall be updated annually and maintained for the life of the mining operation. The update and maintenance of the financial assurance estimates and mechanisms are the responsibility of the mine owner and operator.

Monitoring: Pursuant to SMARA annual inspection requirements and financial assurance requirements, Condition of Approval 20.PLANNING.1 and 10.BS GRADE.3, financial assurance for reclaiming the surface mine shall be reviewed and approved by the County and the California Department of Conservation on an annual basis.

NOISE Would the project result in

Definitions for Noise Acceptability Ratings

Where indicated below, the appropriate Noise Acceptability Rating(s) has been checked.

NA - Not Applicable

A - Generally Acceptable

B - Conditionally Acceptable

C - Generally Unacceptable

D - Land Use Discouraged

30. Airport Noise

a) 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 expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?

NA A B C D

b) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the

Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Findings of Fact: a-c) The proposal does not include recreational facilities and does not require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities nor does the proposal include the use of existing recreational facilities which may cause substantial physical deterioration of the facility. The subject site is not located within a CSA or within a Community Parks and Recreation Plan.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

42. Recreational Trails

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Source: Riv. Co. 800-Scale Equestrian Trail Maps, Open Space and Conservation Map for Western County trail alignments

Findings of Fact: No recreational trails currently exist or are being proposed in the project area.

Mitigation: No Mitigation Measures are required

WRONG!

Monitoring: No Monitoring Measures are required

TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC Would the project

43.* Circulation

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing a measure of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation, including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?

b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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d) Alter waterborne, rail or air traffic?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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e) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g. farm equipment)?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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f) Cause an effect upon, or a need for new or altered maintenance of roads?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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g) Cause an effect upon circulation during the project's construction?

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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h) Result in inadequate emergency access or access

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Potentially Significant Impact	Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Findings of Fact: N/A

Mitigation: N/A

Monitoring: N/A

MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

51. 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, 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?

Source: Staff review, Project Application Materials

WRONG!

Findings of Fact: Implementation of the proposed project would not substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife populations to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, or 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.

52. Does the project have impacts which 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, other current projects and probable future projects)?

Source: Staff review, Project Application Materials

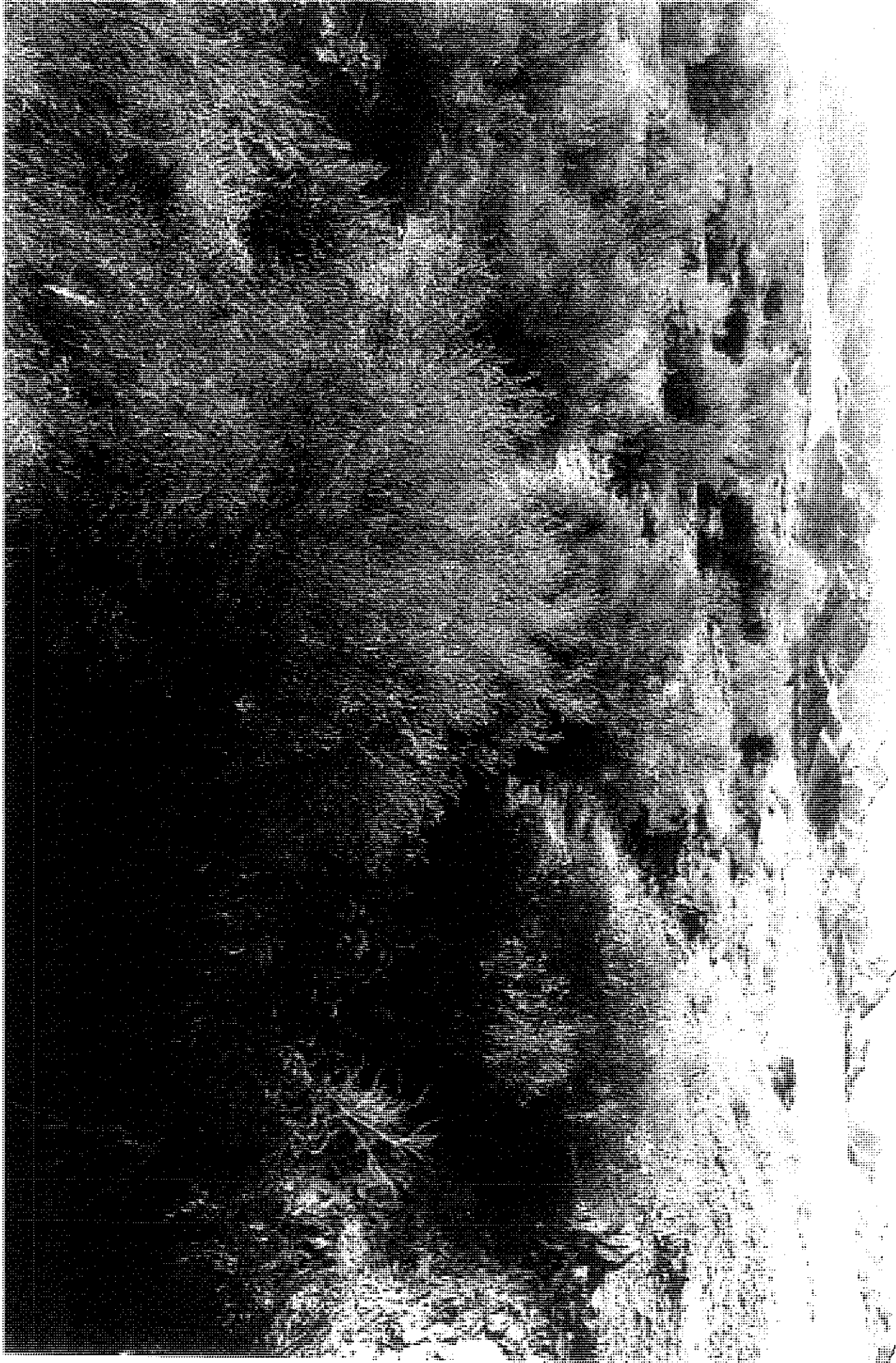
Findings of Fact: The project does not have impacts which are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable.

53. Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

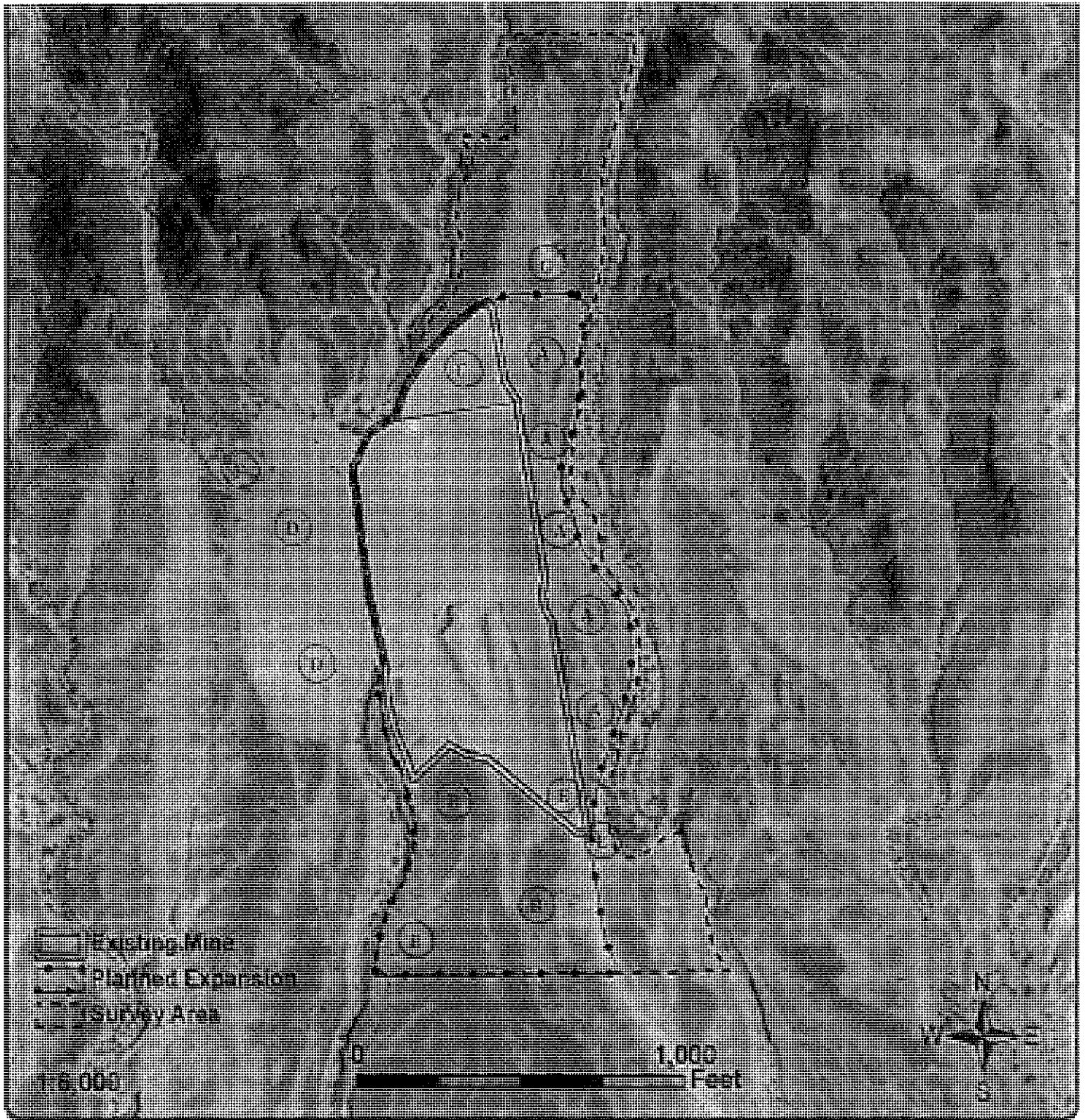
Source: Staff review, Project Application Materials

Findings of Fact: The proposed project would not result in environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.









- Area A-Possible Indian artifact & historic WWII staging area, forested wildlife area.
- Area B-Pristine desert soil with relatively undisturbed dark rock top layer.
- Area C-Mountainous peak of approximate 500+'
- Area D-Older area that has been flattened uphill by a tractor blade.
- Point E-Old cement dam of 30' high by 30' wide.
- Area F-Pristine solid rock falls
- Area G-Archeological Bouse Formation

Aerial Photograph Figure 3

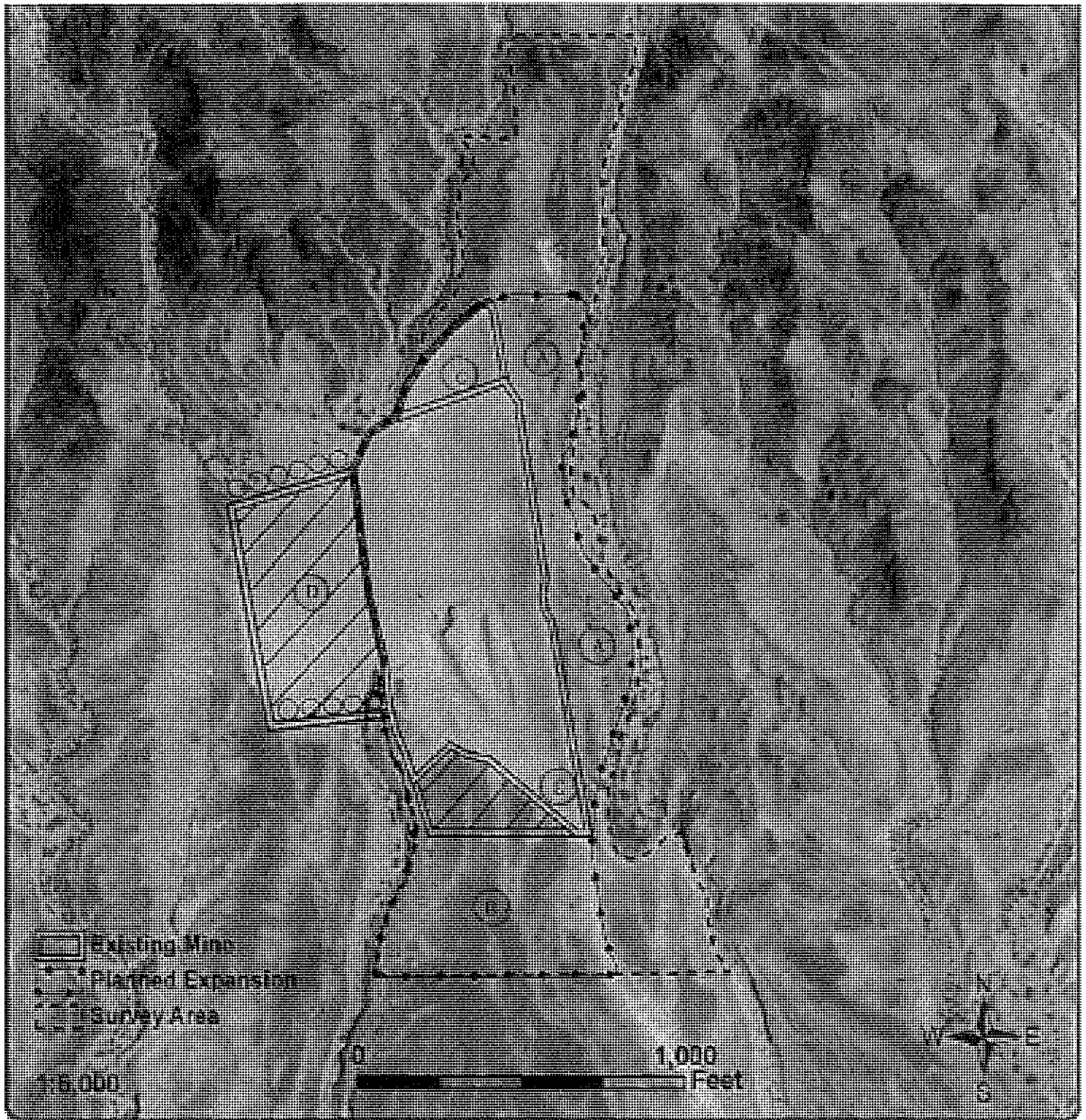
*PVID NORTH GRAVEL PIT
County of Riverside, California*

(Photo provided by TerraServer, 5/27/2009)
(Exhibit provided by L&L Environmental)

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Riverside, CA 92051*

951-780-8100



- Area A-Possible Indian artifact & historic WWII staging area.
- Area B-Pristine desert soil with relatively undisturbed dark rock top layer.
- Area C-Mountainous peak of approximate 500+'
- Area D-Older area that has been flattened uphill by a tractor blade.
- Point E-Old cement dam of 30' high by 30' wide.
- Area F-Pristine solid rock falls
- Area O-Piled rock dam

Aerial Photograph Figure 3

*PVID NORTH GRAVEL PIT
County of Riverside, California*

(Photo provided by TerraServer, 5/27/2009)
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