



# County of San Diego

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## NOTICE OF PREPARATION DOCUMENTATION

**DATE:** October 17, 2019

**PROJECT NAME:** COTTONWOOD SAND MINING

**PROJECT NUMBER(S):** PDS2018-MUP-18-023, PDS2018-RP-18-001

**PROJECT APPLICANT:** New West Investment Group, Inc., 565 N. Magnolia Avenue, El Cajon, CA 92020; Attn: Mr. Greg Brown

**ENV. REVIEW NUMBER:** PDS2018-ER-18-19-007

### PROJECT LOCATION:

The project site entrance is at 3121 Willow Glen Drive in the Valle de Oro Community Planning Area, within the southwestern portion of the unincorporated area of San Diego County. The project site extends west to east from approximately 600 feet east of the intersection of Willow Glen Drive and Jamacha Road, to approximately 0.25 miles west of the intersection of Willow Glen Drive and Hillsdale Drive. Willow Glen Drive parallels the north side of the project site and Steele Canyon Road bisects the western portion of the site.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The project seeks approval of a Major Use Permit (MUP) and Reclamation Plan to conduct a sand mining operation on 251 acres of an approximately 280-acre property that has been and is currently known as the Cottonwood Golf Club. The current MUP 61-090 W2 for the golf club use would be disestablished and the remaining 29 acres of the golf course use would revert to the underlying zoning classifications of S80 (Open Space), S88 (Specific Plan), and S90 (Holding Area). The currently operating Ivanhoe golf course and clubhouse would cease operations upon approval of the MUP, if approved. Sand mining would occur on approximately 214 of the 251 acres.

The project's mining operations would extract, process, and transport aggregate (sand and gravel) using conventional earth moving and processing equipment. Approximately 4.8 million cubic yards (CY) (7.05 million tons) of material would be extracted and processed, with approximately 3.8 million CY (5.7 million tons) of marketable aggregate produced for sale over

a 10-year period. Extraction operations would be limited to a maximum production of 380,000 CY (570,000 tons) of construction grade aggregate per calendar year.

Sand mining activities would be conducted in three phases over a period of 10 years beginning with Phase 1 in the western portion of the site that is currently occupied by the closed 18-hole Lakes golf course. Phase 1 would include grading and construction of the processing plant on the west side of the Cottonwood Golf Club clubhouse; placement of a mobile conveyor line from the processing plant to the Phase 1 extraction area; and development of a new access point to the Phase 1 area at the intersection of Willow Glen Drive and Muirfield Drive, west of the Steele Canyon Road. This new access would be necessary as the clearance height of the bridge that crosses the Sweetwater River on Steele Canyon Road would not allow large trucks or heavy equipment used for mining operations to pass beneath the bridge. The new access point will be used to allow access to the area by employees, vendor's service vehicles and reclamation crews during Phase 1 operations. This access point would not be used for material transport.

The processing plant site would consist of aggregate screening and washing facilities, three settling ponds, loadout area, and support structures and buildings (e.g., modular scale house and weigh scales, two tool storage containers, office kiosk, and office trailer). The mobile conveyor line would transport excavated aggregate materials to the plant from the Phase 1 area by extending under the Steel Canyon Road bridge. The conveyor line would be mobile to provide material transport from each phase to the processing plant.

Mining would proceed from Phase 1 towards the east to Phases 2 and 3. The mobile conveyor line would be moved to transport aggregate from Phases 2 and 3 to the processing plant. The entire extraction process is expected to be complete after a 10-year period. Approximately 20 to 25 acres would be subject to active extraction at any one time. The maximum excavation depth is proposed to be 40 feet below the existing land surface outside the Sweetwater River channel. The average depth of excavation is expected to be approximately 20 feet. Excavation of the existing river channel would not occur; however, excavation would result in an increased channel width of 250 to 300 feet. The existing river channel would hold and transfer low flow through the project site.

Reclamation and revegetation of the mined area would comprise a fourth phase (Phase 4) and begin in the second year as mining proceeds to the east and would end two years after mining activities cease. Topsoil material would be salvaged and stored in low berms or windrows along the edges of the excavation boundaries and then mixed with wash fines and placed as final cover on areas that have reached final grade. Revegetation with native plant species would begin immediately once grading and topsoil placement is completed in excavated areas. Phase 4 would include final reclamation grading, clean-up and removal of the processing plant, and completion of revegetation of remaining excavated areas with native plant species. Thus, total project duration would be 12 years. Revegetated and restored habitat would be maintained and monitored for a minimum of five years, or until the project's performance standards are met. Performance standards would include specifications for amount of native cover, non-native cover, invasive species cover, and native species richness criteria.

Sand excavation and processing is proposed to occur Monday through Friday, between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 5:00 P.M. Trucking operations for material sales would occur during the week from 9:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. to avoid peak traffic periods in the area. No material sales or trucking will occur on weekends. A total of 88 one-way (176 round trip) truck trips per day would be generated. In addition, a total of 14 one-way (28 round trip) light vehicle trips and 4 one-way (8 round trip) vendor trips (fuel, supplies, service companies, etc.) would be generated per day. The existing driveways and parking lot located on Willow Glen Drive next to the clubhouse would be modified to accommodate site access for mining operations and material sales.

The Project site is currently zoned as Open Space (S80 (4 acres)), Specific Planning Area (S88 (32 acres)) and Holding Area (S90 (244 acres)). The S80 designation is used to provide appropriate controls for areas considered generally unsuitable for intensive development, including hazard or resource areas, public lands, recreation sites, or lands subject to open space easement or similar restrictions. The S90 zone is intended to prevent isolated or premature land uses from occurring on lands for which adequate public services and facilities are unavailable or, for which the determination of the appropriate zoning regulations is precluded by contemplated or adopted planning proposals or by a lack of economic, demographic, geographic, or other data. The majority of sand mining activities are proposed on parcels zoned S90.

#### **PROBABLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:**

The probable environmental effects associated with the project are detailed in the attached Environmental Initial Study. All questions answered "Potentially Significant Impact" or "Less than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated" will be analyzed further in the Environmental Impact Report. All questions answered "Less than Significant Impact" or "Not Applicable" will not be analyzed further in the Environmental Impact Report.

The following is a list of the subject areas to be analyzed in the EIR and the particular issues of concern:

- Aesthetic Resources
- Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Hydrology & Water Quality
- Land Use Planning
- Noise
- Transportation/Traffic
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Wildfire Hazards

#### **Attachments:**

- Project Regional Location Map
- Project Detailed Location Map

Cottonwood Sand Mining  
Notice of Preparation

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October 24, 2019

Plot Plan Exhibit  
Environmental Initial Study