



County of San Diego

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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY RECIRCULATION OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE COTTONWOOD SAND MINING PROJECT

June 29, 2023

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the County of San Diego is recirculating for public review portions of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Cottonwood Sand Mining Project (project) in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Both the Draft EIR and the Recirculated Draft EIR can be reviewed online at https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/ceqa_public_review.html, and at the Planning & Development Services (PDS), Project Processing Counter, 5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 110, San Diego, California 92123. Comments on the Recirculated Draft EIR must be sent to the PDS address or email listed below and should reference the project numbers and name. The County encourages written comments to be submitted in electronic format.

COTTONWOOD SAND MINING PROJECT (PDS2018-MUP-18-023), (PDS2018-RP-18-001); LOG NO. PDS2018-ER-18-19-007; SCH# 2019100513

The Cottonwood Sand Mining Project (Project) proposes the conversion of the existing Cottonwood Golf Club golf courses to a ten-year sand mining operation with an additional two-year reclamation period. Approximately 214.4 acres of the approximately 280-acre site are proposed for extractive use and restoration which would occur in a total of four phases. The extraction process would occur in three phases over the span of ten years and the cleanup, equipment removal, and final reclamation would occur in the fourth phase over two years. Areas included within the Project boundary that are not disturbed by mining would be subject to habitat improvement through removal of invasive species in the river channel (if necessary) or would be left in their current condition including the existing Sweetwater River channel. The project would make certain improvements to Willow Glen Drive prior to beginning mining operations. The Project's mining operations would extract, process, and transport aggregate consisting primarily of sand suitable for Portland cement concrete. Approximately 4.3 million cubic yards (cy) (6.40 million tons) of material are proposed to be extracted, with approximately 3.8 million cy (5.7 million tons) produced for market use. Those materials undesirable for processing (approximately 427,00 cy) would be retained on site and utilized for backfilling. In addition, approximately 2.5 million cy would be imported to the site to meet the sites overall backfill requirements.

Sand excavation and processing would occur Monday through Friday, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Trucking operations for material sales and backfill import would occur Monday through

Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.. There would be no processing of materials or trucking from the site on Saturdays, Sundays, and major holidays. Reclamation of the site would include the removal of all artificial structures, grading to achieve final landforms, incorporation of accumulated wash fines, salvaged topsoil, and imported backfill materials, as well as revegetation and monitoring. The project requires a Major Use Permit (MUP) and Reclamation Plan (RP).

The project is located at 3121 Willow Glen Drive within the Valle De Oro Community Planning Area within 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.

Recirculation of the Draft EIR

The Draft EIR for the Cottonwood Sand Mining Project was previously circulated for public review from December 16, 2021 to February 28, 2022. As a result of the public comments received from the circulation of the Draft EIR, changes were made to the project description and analysis of biological resource impacts. Specifically, new information regarding the need for additional soil import to achieve final reclamation elevations and the number of truck haul trips generated by the project to accommodate this import was added to the project description. New information regarding the potential for significant impacts to biological resources, the findings of additional biological surveys, and additional mitigation measures were added to the biological resources analysis.

Together, the Draft EIR and Recirculated Draft EIR identify significant environmental impacts to the following environmental factors: Aesthetics; Biological Resources; Cultural Resources; Noise, Paleontological Resources, and Tribal Cultural Resources. Impacts to Aesthetics, even with mitigation measures, would remain significant and unavoidable. All other potential significant impacts would be reduced to less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures.

The County requests that reviewers limit the scope of their comments to only the portions of the Draft EIR that have changed and are included in the Recirculated Draft EIR. Both comments from circulation of the Draft EIR (December 16, 2021 to February 28, 2022) and comments from circulation of the Recirculated Draft EIR will be included in the Final EIR.

For a complete discussion of the rationale for recirculation and guidance for commenters, refer to the "Recirculation Readers Guide" included at the beginning of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comments on the Recirculated Draft EIR must be received **no later than August 14, 2023, at 4:00 p.m.** (a 45-day public review period). Comments must be sent to Planning & Developments Services, attn: Christopher Jacobs, 5510 Overland Avenue, Suite 310, San Diego, CA 92123 or emailed to christopher.jacobs@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Public Meeting

An in-person public meeting will be held on the Recirculated Draft EIR on **July 25, 2023, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.** at Hillsdale Middle School, 1301 Brabham Street, El Cajon, CA 92019

For additional information, please contact Christopher Jacobs at 619-323-8718 or by e-mail at christopher.jacobs@sdcounty.ca.gov.