



Governor's Office of Planning & Research

May 12, 2021

May 12 2021

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Cortney Flather
Lassen County
Planning and Building Services
707 Nevada Street, Suite 5
Susanville, CA 96130

Copy sent via email: CFlather@co.lassen.ca.us

SUBJECT: WARD LAKE PIT EXPANSION PROJECT; NOTICE OF PREPARATION; STATE CLEARING HOUSE NO. 2018022056

Dear Ms. Flather:

Thank you for including the Department of Conservation's Division of Mine Reclamation (Division) in the environmental review process for the Ward Lake Pit Expansion Project (Proposed Project) Notice of Preparation (NOP). The NOP indicates that Lassen County (County), as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will prepare a Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for the Proposed Project.

As described in the NOP, the Proposed Project will amend the existing use permit and reclamation plan amendment (RPA) for the Ward Lake Pit Mine (CA Mine ID# 91-18-0008) to allow for a mine boundary expansion of approximately 51 acres to a total of 160 disturbed acres, increase the maximum volume per year from 100,000 to 200,000, and extend the end date of mining to 2050.

The Division's primary focus is on active surface mining operations; however, the Division also addresses issues related to abandoned (pre-1976) legacy mines. Additionally, the Division has review responsibilities associated with lead agency implementation of SMARA. SMARA provides a comprehensive surface mining and reclamation policy to assure that:

- Adverse environmental effects of surface mining operations are prevented or minimized and mined lands are reclaimed to a usable condition which is readily adaptable for alternative land uses.
- Production and conservation of minerals are encouraged, while giving consideration to values relating to recreation, watershed, wildlife, range and forage, and aesthetic enjoyment.
- Residual hazards to the public health and safety are eliminated.

Division staff has reviewed the subject NOP pursuant to CEQA Statutes and Guidelines and offers the following comments at this time:

- Division staff will provide comments on the RPA for this proposed mining activity once the Division receives the complete RPA and any supporting documents,

Ms. Courtney Flather
NOP for draft SEIR (SCH No. 2018022056)
March 12, 2021

along with the statement from the County that certifies the submission as complete and in accordance with PRC Section 2772.1(a)(3)(A-C).

- Division staff will provide comments on the FACE for the Proposed Project in accordance with PRC Section 2773.4(a-d).

The Division requests to be included on the distribution list for this Proposed Project. Additionally, the Division requests that any subsequent project documents (e.g., the Draft SEIR, hearing notices for the Draft and Final SEIRs, and any supplemental environmental documents), as well as a copy of the certified Final SEIR, be sent to the Division at DMR-Submittals@conservation.ca.gov or the mailing address on the bottom of page 1 of this letter. If you have any questions, please contact me at (916) 323-9198.

Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Carol E. Atkins, Manager
Environmental Services Unit

ec: State Clearinghouse, state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov

Department of Conservation, Office of Legislative and Regulatory Affairs,
OLRA@conservation.ca.gov