



October 4, 2021

Chuck Beatty
Amador County
Planning Department
810 Court Street
Jackson, CA 95642-2132

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Oct 04 2021

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Copy sent via email: planning@amadorgov.org

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF PREPARATION AND EARLY CONSULTION
LONE QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT (SCH# 2021090273)
CA MINE ID# 91-03-0011

Dear Mr. Beatty:

Thank you for including the Department of Conservation's Division of Mine Reclamation (Division) in the environmental review process for the Lone Quarry Expansion Project (Proposed Project) Notice of Preparation (NOP) and early consultation. The NOP indicates that Amador County (County), as lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), will prepare a draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the Proposed Project.

As described in the NOP, the Proposed Project will amend the existing use permit and reclamation plan (RP) for the Lone Mine (CA Mine ID# 91-03-0011) to allow for the expanded proposed mining area from approximately 56 acres to approximately 136 acres and the increase the depth of mining by 605 feet (ft.); proposing to mine to 280 ft. below mean sea level (MSL), compared to the existing approved conditions of mining to depth of 325 ft. above MSL). The stockpile total surface disturbance area would increase from 34 acres to approximately 86 acres and have a maximum elevation of 560 ft. above MSL.

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

Mr. Chuck Beatty
NOP for draft EIR (SCH No. 2021090273)
October 4, 2021

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

Comment 1:

The Division recognizes that there is a February 2021 Reclamation Plan Amendment (RPA) that is part of the documentation for the draft EIR, and that this RPA has been prepared prior to CEQA review. The Division notes that the CEQA review may include the approval of mitigation measures to reduce impacts that may pertain to the reclamation of the mined lands. The County may want to consider including these type of mitigation measures in the RPA when they submit the document to the Division for review and comment pursuant to SMARA requirements.

Comment 2:

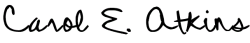
The Division looks forward to reviewing the environmental baseline discussion presented in the draft EIR and the presentation of mitigation measures to minimize impacts from the surface mining activities. The Division recognizes the special plant communities on site, including the Blue Oak woodlands and vernal pools. The Division further recognizes the requirements in the Amador County General Plan Open Space Element, which "includes discussion of the County's sensitive biological resources including oak woodland habitat, wetlands, riparian habitats, and other sensitive communities, and special-status species."

Comment 3:

Division staff will provide specific comments on the RPA for this proposed mining activity once the Division receives the complete RPA and any supporting documents, 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). Additionally, Division staff will provide comments on the financial assurance cost estimate 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 EIR, hearing notices for the draft and final EIRs, and any supplemental environmental documents), as well as a copy of the certified final EIR, 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