



County of Lassen
Department of Planning and Building Services

• Planning • Building • Environmental Health • Code Enforcement • Surveyor • Surface Mining

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October 26, 2023

Zoning & Building
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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION
OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT**

TO: Responsible and Trustee Agencies

FROM: Maurice Anderson, Director
Lassen County Department of Planning and Building Services
707 Nevada Street, Suite 5
Susanville, CA 96130

SUBJECT: UP #2023-010, RP #2023-001, EIR #2023-004, TLT Enterprises Skyline Mine

The County of Lassen will be the Lead Agency in processing applications for a Use Permit (UP) and Reclamation Plan (RP) and preparing an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a proposed surface mining operation. A Draft EIR is being prepared by the applicant’s consultant and will be reviewed by Lassen County and, if necessary, a third-party consultant. This Notice of Preparation (NOP) has been prepared to solicit comments from interested agencies as to the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. When (and if) approved, your agency may need to use this EIR when considering permits or other approvals for the project.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, responses to this NOP must be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than 30 days after receipt of this notice. Please send written responses to Nancy McAllister, Senior Planner, Lassen County Department of Planning and Building Services, at the above address or via email to landuse@co.lassen.ca.us. Please provide a contact person for your agency in the written response.

This NOP, attachments (e.g., Reclamation Plan/Use Permit application and supporting documents), and the project file are available for review at the Lassen County Department of Planning and Building Services, located at 707 Nevada Street, Suite 5, Susanville, CA 96130.

The department is open from 7:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, excepting holidays. The NOP and attachments can also be found on the Department of Planning and Building Services website by following the link below:
<https://www.lassencounty.org/dept/planning-and-building-services/environmental-documents-noticing-and-attachments>

1.0 Project Location

The proposed project would be located on approximately 460 acres of a 640-acre parcel, located approximately one-and-a-half miles east of State Routh 139 off of Skyline Road to the northeast of Susanville in Lassen County (APN 101-110-024).

2.0 Project Description

The proposed project at the Skyline Aggregates site would include mining, processing, and reclamation activities by Hat Creek Construction and Materials, Inc. on approximately 460 acres of a 640-acre parcel. The remaining acreage within the project site will serve as setback areas and buffers from surrounding properties, critical habitats, and archeological resources. Materials mined onsite will consist of hard rock aggregate. Aggregate mined on the site will be crushed, screened, washed, and graded onsite and then used in the production of virgin aggregates, asphalt mix, and ready-mix concrete. Equipment onsite will include loaders, generators, a concrete batch plant, concrete trucks, service truck, man lift, belly dump, articulated dump truck, crusher, and asphalt batch plant. Wet suppression will be used when necessary to control dust caused by excavation, processing activities, and materials transport. The operation plans to operate using power and natural gas supplied from the City of Susanville. Backup generators will be available onsite.

Proposed mining operations will follow the guidelines established by SMARA and will conform to the monitoring schedule established by the Lead Agency. The site will be mined in five phases, taking approximately 10 years per phase and 50 years total to complete. Mining operations are estimated to begin in the spring of 2025, following permit approval. The termination date will be based on demand.

"Overburden," the material lying above the aggregate deposits, will be removed and stockpiled to be used in support of site reclamation. Overburden will be used as backfill after mining activities are complete. Overburden varies in nature depending on its location onsite, but is generally a mix of loam and clay and very limited in supply. Rock is generally at the surface. Topsoil will not be mapped prior to mining. To the extent possible, overburden will be moved directly to its final planned location immediately after excavation. If stockpiling is necessary, stockpiles will be managed to minimize water and wind erosion. Any stockpiles will receive an application of hydroseed/mulch to stabilize the slope. If stockpiled, the topsoil will be clearly identified to distinguish the topsoil material. Topsoil removal will not precede mining by more than one year. Topsoil stockpiles will be maintained, identified, signed, and managed prior to reclamation.

3.0 Project Site Characteristics

The Project site is located to the southwest of Antelope Mountain in Hidden Valley. Topography generally gently slopes from north to south. Site elevation ranges from 4160 feet above sea level in the southwest corner of the Project site to 4350 feet along the northern edge of the Project site.

The existing visual characteristics of the site are undeveloped and is composed of low sage and juniper woodland habitats. The undergrowth varies in density but mainly consists of open land with bitterbrush, sage brush, juniper, perennial and annual grasses and forbs.

Special-status species that are known to occur, or have the potential to occur, within the project area include the greater sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*), prairie falcon (*Falco mexicanus*), American badger (*Taxidea taxus*), long-eared myotis (*Myotis evotis*), North American porcupine (*Erethizon dorsatum*), Morrison's bumble bee (*Bombus morrisonz*), Pulsifer's milk-vetch (*Astragalus pulsiferae* var. *pulsiferae*), and Susanville beardtongue (*Penstemon sudans*).

No perennial surface water courses are found on the site. One ephemeral drainage exists on the eastern portion of the parcel, outside of the proposed mining area. Surface flow from the site currently is directed to the agricultural land to the south. There is no direct connection to waters of the United States or waters of the State of California. Hat Creek Construction & Materials intends to retain all stormwater that contacts industrial activities onsite.

No portion of the site is located in a 100-year floodplain or designated floodway.

Summers are warm and arid. The average summer temperature is between 75 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) and 83°F with lows ranging around 52°F. Average winter temperatures range from 24°F to 41 °F. There is more snow than rain in this area. Winds are light and elevation changes rapidly within a ten-mile radius of Susanville. Average wind directions shift from the northeast to the northwest with most wind activity during the months of September through November. Wind speed usually averages less than 5mph.

The proposed project site is located in the Northeast Plateau Air Basin, which comprises Siskiyou, Modoc, and Lassen counties. The Northeast Plateau Air basin has a climate regime that is distinct from the rest of California. The basin has sharply defined seasons that follow a continental, rather than marine, pattern. Winters are cold and snowy; summers are warm and dry. The region receives no transported air pollution from major urban areas. As in many rural areas in California, particulates from dust and wood smoke are sometimes a problem.

4.0 Potential Environmental Impacts

The County intends to thoroughly review the project and all potential issues that could result in significant impacts. That said, according to the applicant's consultant, potentially significant impacts in at least the following categories have been identified:

- Aesthetics
- Biological Resources
- Cultural and Tribal Cultural Resources

Despite currently proposed mitigation measures, impacts in the above categories may remain significant and unavoidable.

MLA:njm

Distribution: Supervisor Neely (3); TLT Enterprises; VESTRA Resources; Co. Ag. Commissioner; Co. Assessor's Office; County Administrative Officer; County Counsel; Co. Fire Warden/CAL FIRE; Co. Environmental Health Dept.; Lassen Co. Reg. Solid Waste Mgmt. Authority; Lassen Co. Fish & Game Commission; Co. Public Works/Road Div.; Bureau of Land Management -Susanville; NRCS; US Army Corp of Engineers; US Fish & Wildlife; Pit River Tribe of California; Greenville Rancheria of Maidu Indians; Susanville Indian Rancheria; Honey Lake Maidu; Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California; Susan River Fire Protection District; City of Susanville Planning; City of Susanville Road/Public Works; Co. Air Pollution Control Officer; Lassen County Community College District; Lassen Union High School District; Susanville Elem. School District; LMUD; Banner Lassen Medical Center (Admin); Office of Planning and Research (OPR)

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