

Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal

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SCH # Addendum to 1996061052
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Project Title: Soledad Mountain Project by Golden Queen Mining Company, LLC (Modification of Conditional Use Permit No. 27, Map 196; Modification of Conditional Use Permit No. 41, Map No. 213; Modification of Conditional Use Permit No. 22, Map 214)

Lead Agency: Kern County Planning and Natural Resources Department Contact Person: Randall Cates
Mailing Address: 2700 "M" Street Suite 100 Phone: (661) 862-8612
City: Bakersfield Zip: 93301 County: Kern

Project Location: County: Kern City/Nearest Community: Mojave
Cross Streets: Silver Queen Road and Holt Street Zip Code: 93501

Lat. / Long.: 34° 59' 43.32350" N / 118° 11' 6.98269" W Total Acres: 1,156
Assessor's Parcel No.: Multiple Section: 31, 32 / 5, 6, 7, 8 / 1, 12 Twp.: T11N / T10N / T10N Range: R12W / R12W / R13W Base: SBB&M
Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: Highway 14 Waterways: Los Angeles Aqueduct
Airports: N/A Railways: east of the project site Schools: N/A

Document Type:

CEQA: NOP Draft EIR NEPA: NOI Other: Joint Document
 Early Cons Supplement/Subsequent EIR EA Final Document
 Neg Dec (Prior SCH No.) Draft EIS Other
 Mit Neg Dec Other EIR Addendum (Prior SCH No. 1996061052) FONSI

Local Action Type:

General Plan Update Specific Plan Rezone Annexation
 General Plan Amendment Master Plan Prezone Redevelopment
 General Plan Element Planned Unit Development Use Permit Coastal Permit
 Community Plan Site Plan Land Division (Subdivision, etc.) Other Easement Vacation

Development Type:

Residential: Units _____ Acres _____ Water Facilities: Type _____ MGD _____
 Office: Sq.ft. _____ Acres _____ Employees _____ Transportation: Type _____
 Commercial: Sq.ft. _____ Acres _____ Employees _____ Mining: Mineral gold, silver, aggregate
 Industrial: Sq.ft. _____ Acres _____ Employees _____ Power: Type _____ MW _____
 Educational _____ Waste Treatment: Type _____ MGD _____
 Recreational _____ Hazardous Waste: Type _____
 Other: _____

Project Issues Discussed in Document:

Aesthetic/Visual Fiscal Recreation/Parks Vegetation
 Agricultural Land Flood Plain/Flooding Schools/Universities Water Quality
 Air Quality Forest Land/Fire Hazard Septic Systems Water Supply/Groundwater
 Archeological/Historical Geologic/Seismic Sewer Capacity Wetland/Riparian
 Biological Resources Minerals Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading Wildlife
 Coastal Zone Noise Solid Waste Growth Inducing
 Drainage/Absorption Population/Housing Balance Toxic/Hazardous Land Use
 Economic/Jobs Public Services/Facilities Traffic/Circulation Cumulative Effects
 Other Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Tribal Cultural Resources, Energy, Wildfire

Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation:

Surface mining operation and associated structures and facilities, undeveloped land. Zoning: A (Exclusive Agriculture), A WE (Exclusive Agriculture – Wind Energy Combining), A-1 (Limited Agriculture), E(2 ½) (Estate Residential 2 ½ acres), E(2 ½) RS (Estate Residential 2 ½ acres, Residential Suburban Combining). Kern County General Plan: 1.1 (Public Lands); Soledad Mtn.-Elephant Butte Specific Plan: Public Lands, Low Density Residential, Mineral Extraction and Processing

Project Description: (please use a separate page if necessary)

This document has been prepared as an Addendum to the previously-certified 1997 Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (SCH No. 1996061052) and subsequent 2010 Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SCH No. 1996061052) for the Soledad Mountain Project.

Golden Queen Mining, LLC (GQM) is proposing to modify three existing Conditional Use Permits (No. 27, Map 196; No. 41, Map 213; No. 22, Map 214) and to amend the existing Reclamation Plan to re-authorize mining and related activities in a similar configuration as originally approved and permitted by the County and the Bureau of Land Management ("BLM") in 1997 (the "Modified Project").

GQM currently proposes that the total time for certain mining activities be extended as follows: excavation for approximately 15 years, leaching for the production of gold and silver for 17 years (which overlaps with the 15 years of excavation), and a further 2 years of rinsing and drain down of the heap leach. The production and sale of aggregate and construction materials is expected to continue for up to 40 years. The proposed termination date for the Modified Project is April 10, 2061, subject to production rates and market demand.

The Modified Project will continue extractive mining operations across a similar footprint as originally approved in 1997. Total acreage disturbed under the Modified Project includes an additional 258 acres compared to the 1997 Project. Reclamation under the Modified Project will be improved compared to the 1997 Project (which proposed to only reclaim 419 acres of the 930 acres of total disturbance), and will address all disturbed acres. No changes are proposed to existing mining methods, processing systems or facilities, operating hours or traffic volumes.

Reviewing Agencies Checklist

Lead Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distribution by marking agencies below with and "X". If you have already sent your document to the agency please denote that with an "S".

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Resources Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Emergency Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boating & Waterways, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Historic Preservation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> California Highway Patrol | <input type="checkbox"/> Office of Public School Construction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CalFire | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caltrans District # <u>6 & 9</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Regulation, Department of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Division of Aeronautics | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Utilities Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Planning (Headquarters) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional WQCB # <u>Lahontan</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley Flood Protection Board | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy | <input type="checkbox"/> S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers and Mtns Conservancy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Colorado River Board | <input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin River Conservancy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corrections, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> State Lands Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Delta Protection Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Clean Water Grants |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Commission | <input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Rights |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish & Game Region # <u>Fresno</u> | <input type="checkbox"/> Tahoe Regional Planning Agency |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food & Agriculture, Department of | <input type="checkbox"/> Toxic Substances Control, Department of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Services, Department of | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Resources, Department of |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services, Department of | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Housing & Community Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>CalGEM - Bakersfield</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated Waste Management Board | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other <u>So. Joaquin Archaeological Information Center</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Heritage Commission | |

Local Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)

Starting Date July 13, 2020 Ending Date August 12, 2020

Lead Agency (Complete if applicable):

Consulting Firm: _____ Applicant: _____
 Address: _____ Address: _____
 City/State/Zip: _____ City/State/Zip: _____
 Contact: _____ Phone: _____
 Phone: _____

Signature of Lead Agency Representative: _____ **Date:** July 13, 2020