

# Planning Department 168 North Edwards Street Post Office Drawer L Independence, California 93526

Phone: (760) 878-0263 FAX: (760) 878-0382 E-Mail: inyoplanning@

inyocounty.us

AGENDA ITEM NO.:

6 (Action Item – Public Hearing)

PLANNING COMMISSION **MEETING DATE:** 

December 3, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Minor Amendment to Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan 78-02 (Twin Mountain Rock Venture / Red Hill Quarry)

# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The applicant requests a minor amendment to Condition #4 (Mapping) of Conditional Use Permit 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan 78-02, approved on May 26, 2021, to revise the required mapping frequency from annual to every five (5) years and to allow the use of updated mapping technologies such as drone-based photogrammetry and handheld GPS-based elevation tools. The amendment aims to maintain compliance with the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) while reducing unnecessary costs associated with traditional licensed surveys. By incorporating multiple acceptable mapping methods, the amendment modernizes monitoring practices while preserving the County's ability to verify slope stability, pit depth, and reclamation progress...

The project qualifies for a CEQA exemption under Section 15301 (Existing Facilities), as the modification pertains only to monitoring and mapping procedures and does not expand the approved mining disturbance or change the physical operations authorized by CUP 1978-09.

# PROJECT INFORMATION.

**Supervisory District: 5** 

Project Applicant: Twin Mountain Rock Venture, LLC

**Property Owner:** Angelus Block Company, Inc.

Site Address: 1000 Cinder Road, Little Lake, CA, approximately 12 miles south of

Olancha, east of U.S. 395

Community: Coso Junction

**A.P.N.:** 037-090-11

General Plan: Open Space and Recreation (OSR)

Zoning: Open Space (OS)

Size of Parcel: Approximately 198-acres

# **Surrounding Land Use:**

| Location : | Use:                 | Gen. Plan Designation              | Zoning                                  |  |  |
|------------|----------------------|------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Site       | Mine                 | Open Space and<br>Recreation (OSR) | Open Space - 40 acre<br>minimum (OS-40) |  |  |
| North      | Vacant/Open<br>Space | State and Federal Lands (SFL)      | Open Space - 40 acre minimum (OS-40)    |  |  |
| East       | Vacant/Open<br>Space | State and Federal<br>Lands (SFL)   | Open Space - 40 acre<br>minimum (OS-40) |  |  |
| South      | Vacant/Open<br>Space | State and Federal<br>Lands (SFL)   | Open Space - 40 acre<br>minimum (OS-40) |  |  |
| West       | Vacant/Open<br>Space | State and Federal Lands (SFL)      | Open Space - 40 acre minimum (OS-40)    |  |  |

# **Staff Recommended Action:**

1.) Approve the Minor Amendment to Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 1978-09 and associated Reclamation Plan No. 78-02 (Red Hill Quarry), with the Findings and Conditions as identified in the Staff Report and find the project exempt from CEQA.

#### Alternatives:

- 1.) Deny he requested Minor Amendment to CUP No. 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan No. 78-02. This alternative would retain the existing 2021 condition requiring annual topographic mapping. The operator would continue to submit full contour mapping each year prior to the annual SMARA inspection, regardless of site stability or cost implications.
- 2.) Approve the Minor Amendment to CUP No. 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan No. 78-02 with additional or modified Conditions of Approval. Under this alternative, the Commission could alter the mapping frequency or require supplemental

reporting to address specific monitoring concerns identified during the public hearing.

3.) Continue the public hearing to a future date and provide specific direction to staff regarding what additional information and analysis is needed.

**Project Planner:** 

Ryan Standridge, Associate Planner

# STAFF ANALYSIS

# Background and Overview

The Red Hill Quarry is an active volcanic cinder mine operated by Twin Mountain Rock Venture, LLC under Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan 78-02, located on approximately 198 acres of patented mining land east of U.S. Highway 395 near Little Lake. The site occupies the lower flanks of the Red Hill Cinder Cone within the Coso Mining District and has been mined intermittently since the 1950s for volcanic cinders used in landscaping, lightweight concrete, and road-deicing products. The original CUP 78-09 was approved by the Planning Commission on May 24, 1979, authorizing open-pit cinder mining and reclamation on roughly 116 acres. The permit established operational limits, reclamation slopes, fencing, berm construction. Ownership and operational control later transferred to Angelus Block Company, Inc., which continues to operate the site through Twin Mountain Rock Venture, LLC.

In May 2021, the Planning Commission approved an amendment to CUP 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan 78-02, expanding the permitted area to approximately 198 acres, updating operational phasing, adopting a Mitigated Negative Declaration, and revising conditions to reflect modern SMARA standards. Among those conditions, Condition #4 (Mapping) required submission of a two-foot contour map annually prior to the County's SMARA inspection. In June of 2025, the operator submitted an application for a Minor Amendment requesting to modify Condition #4 to reduce the frequency of required mapping from annual to once every five (5) years. The applicant noted that the cost of annual licensed surveys—estimated at approximately \$15,000 per year—places an undue financial burden on the operation given the limited annual disturbance and minimal changes in site topography. The proposed amendment does not modify the approved mining area, reclamation slopes, or production levels. Instead, it seeks to maintain accurate site monitoring through modern mapping technologies while aligning the submittal frequency with the site's stable conditions and long operational timeline.

# Inyo County Code

Surface Mining and Land Reclamation in Inyo County are governed by Chapter 7.70 of the Inyo County Code which incorporates California's Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 ("SMARA", Public Resource Code Section [PRC] 271 et seq. and California Code of Regulations Section 3500 et seq.). The County is the "lead agency" (ref. PRC)

Section 2728) with State Mining and Geology Board-certified Surface Mining and Reclamation Ordinance (ref. PRC Section 2774.)

# General Plan Consistency

The project remains consistent with the Inyo County General Plan designation of Open Space Recreation (OSR), which allows mining uses with a Conditional Use Permit and an approved Reclamation Plan.

This minor amendment does not alter the approved mining area or reclamation objectives established under CUP 78-09 / RP 78-02. It simply updates the mapping and monitoring requirement to ensure continued compliance with final reclamation contours and slope designs, consistent with General Plan Policy 08.4.4, which calls for the County to:

"Protect the current and future extraction of mineral resources that are important to the County's economy while minimizing impacts on the public and the environment."

The proposed change maintains the site's compatibility with the OSR designation and supports the County's goal of responsible mineral resource management under SMARA.

# Zoning Ordinance Consistency

The property is zoned Open Space with a 40-acre minimum (OS-40) under the Inyo County Zoning Code. The OS-40 zone allows mining and related processing activities as a conditional use when accompanied by an approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and Reclamation Plan. The proposed minor amendment does not modify the approved mining area, operations, or reclamation design authorized under CUP 78-09 / RP 78-02. The change only updates Condition #4 (Mapping) to refine monitoring procedures and ensure continued compliance with reclamation slope and contour requirements. Because the underlying mining use remains unchanged and continues to operate under an active CUP, the project remains consistent with the OS-40 zoning district and the Inyo County Code provisions governing surface mining and reclamation.

# **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW**

The project is exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 (Existing Facilities). The amendment modifies an existing condition of approval related to mapping and site monitoring for the Red Hill Quarry and does not authorize any new ground disturbance, increase in production, or change in the approved mining or reclamation footprint. The activity represents a minor administrative revision to an existing approved operation with no potential for a significant effect on the environment.

# **NOTICING & REVIEW**

Minor Amendment to Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan 78-02 was noticed in the Inyo Register and sent to all property owners within 300 feet of the project Tthirty days before the Planning Commission Hearing. No public comments have been received to date.

#### RECOMMENDATION

Planning Department staff recommends approval of the Minor Amendment to Conditional Use Permit No. 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan No. 78-02 (Twin Mountain Rock Venture/ Red Hill Quarry) with the Findings and Conditions of Approval identified in this staff report, and a determination that the project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15301 (Existing Facilities).:

# **FINDINGS**

- 1. The proposed Minor Amendment to Conditional Use Permit No. 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan No. 78-02 is exempt from environmental review pursuant to CEQA Guidelines §15301 (Existing Facilities), and the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act have been satisfied.
  - [Evidence: Section 15301 exempts minor alterations to existing facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use. The amendment only revises Condition #4 (Mapping) to update the frequency and format of required topographic mapping and site monitoring. No new ground disturbance, operational changes, or expansion of the approved mining or reclamation area will occur. The project simply refines administrative monitoring procedures to ensure continued compliance with approved reclamation contours and slope designs. Therefore, the activity will not result in any significant environmental effect.].
- 2. The proposed Minor Amendment to Conditional Use Permit No. 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan No. 78-02 is consistent with the Inyo County General Plan designation of Open Space Recreation (OSR)).
  - [Evidence: The OSR designation allows mining uses with a Conditional Use Permit and an approved Reclamation Plan. The proposed amendment does not alter the approved mining area, reclamation objectives, or intensity of use. It only updates Condition #4 (Mapping) to ensure continued compliance with approved reclamation contours and slope designs. The project supports General Plan Policy 08.4.4, which directs the County to "protect the current and future extraction of mineral resources that are important to the County's economy while minimizing impacts on the public and the environment. "As such, the amendment maintains consistency with the General Plan and the County's long-term goals for responsible mineral resource management and reclamation.].
- 3. The proposed Minor Amendment to Conditional Use Permit No. 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan No. 78-02 is consistent with the Inyo County Zoning Ordinance, which permits "Mining Uses" as a Conditional Use in the Open Space (OS) Zoning District.
  - [Evidence: The proposed project is consistent with the County zoning designation of Open Space (OS-40), which allows mining uses with an approved Conditional Use Permit and Reclamation Plan. These uses include the extraction and processing of natural resources such as volcanic cinders. The proposed amendment does not expand the existing mining pit or change the approved use; it only revises Condition #4 (Mapping) to update site monitoring and mapping procedures for continued compliance with approved reclamation requirements.].

4. The proposed Amendment to CUP 1978-09 and Amendment to Reclamation Plan 78-02 is necessary and desirable to ensure continued compliance with SMARA and County reclamation requirements.

[Evidence: The amendment updates Condition #4 (Mapping) to establish clear, modernized mapping and monitoring standards using current survey and photogrammetry methods. This change provides more efficient documentation of reclamation progress and slope stability while reducing unnecessary costs associated with annual topographic surveys. The amendment ensures that site monitoring remains accurate and enforceable under Public Resources Code §2773 and Inyo County Code Chapter 7.70, supporting ongoing compliance with approved reclamation objectives and protecting public health, safety, and the environment.]

5. The proposed amendment is properly related to other uses and transportation and service facilities in the vicinity.

[Evidence: The amendment does not change the permitted use, operational intensity, or access routes. Existing transportation and service facilities are adequate to support the continued operation, and no additional infrastructure or services are required]

6. The proposed Amendment to Conditional Use Permit No. 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan No. 78-02 would not, under all the circumstances of this case, adversely affect the health or safety of persons living or working in the vicinity or be materially detrimental to the public welfare.

[Evidence: The proposed amendment involves only a modification to Condition #4 (Mapping) to update monitoring frequency and mapping methods. No new ground disturbance, changes in production, or operational expansion are proposed. All existing environmental safeguards, conditions of approval, and reclamation requirements remain in effect. Therefore, the project would not create any adverse impacts to public health, safety, or welfare.].

7. Reclamation requirements necessitate the amendment for the site.

[Evidence: The proposed amendment updates Condition #4 (Mapping) to ensure continued compliance with current reclamation standards under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) and Inyo County Code Chapter 7.70. The revised condition establishes clear, measurable mapping and monitoring procedures needed to verify reclamation progress, slope stability, and conformance with approved final contours. These updates are necessary to maintain accurate records of site conditions and to support ongoing compliance with State and County reclamation requirements.].

# CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

#### **Term of Conditional Use Permit**

1. The term of the CUP shall not exceed 100 years from the date of approval, or no later than May 26, 2121. The total amount of usable cinder and waste material that can be removed from this pit is 10,714,286 cubic yards. If the 10,714,286 cubic yards are removed prior to the termination date, reclamation shall proceed within six months of it. The Planning Commission may grant an extension upon the application of additional amendments to the CUP and the reclamation plan. To assure continued operation, the above application should be received prior to the expiration date.

# Term of Plan and Timing of Reclamation

2. The term of the reclamation plan shall not exceed fifteen years from the date of approval, or no later than May 26, 2036. The reclamation plan shall be updated for current SMARA requirements up to every 15 years. The Planning Commission may grant an extension upon the application of an additional amendment to the reclamation plan. To assure continued operation, the above application should be received prior to the expiration date.

# Interim Management Plan

3. Throughout the 100-year life of this project, the interim management plan shall be implemented during periods of "idle" operation. If zero production occurs for a period of five consecutive years, the reclamation plan shall be implemented immediately. Mining cannot occur until an amended reclamation plan is submitted and approved by the Inyo County Planning Commission.

# **Mapping**

4. The operator shall submit an updated site map to the Planning Department every five (5) years for the duration of the plan. The map shall clearly illustrate existing topography, areas of disturbance, reclaimed areas, and cut/fill slopes. Acceptable methods of data collection include licensed survey, drone-based photogrammetry, or other approved technologies such as handheld GPS-based elevation mapping. Data must include elevation control and be sufficient to verify changes to slope and pit depth over time. Failure to submit updated maps may constitute a violation.

# **Conditions of Mitigated Negative Declaration**

5. All conditions outlined in the current Mitigated Negative Declaration shall be included as conditions of approval for these amendments to CUP 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan 78-02.

- 6. The 100-foot habitat buffer shall be in place prior to any ground disturbance.
- 7. All buildings shall be painted an earthen color in order to blend in with the natural surroundings. The building permits shall not be finalized until buildings are painted in accordance with this condition.
- 8. All mining procedures and reclamation outlined in the Red Hill Quarry Reclamation Plan revised January 2021 shall be recorded by the Planning Department upon approval. The recorded copy shall be the official reclamation plan that both the lead agency and operator will follow.
- 9. The applicant shall submit a notarized letter to the Planning Department accepting responsibility for reclaiming the mined lands as conditioned by the Planning Commission.

#### Financial Assurances

10. Financial assurances in the sum of \$348,012.00 are required in the form of a surety bond, irrevocable letter of credit, cash, or certificate of deposit. Government agencies may also use budget set-asides, or pledge of revenue to post their financial assurances. Financial assurances shall be posted with the Inyo County Planning Department. Said assurances shall be made payable to the County of Inyo and the Director of the California Department of Conservation and the Bureau of Land Management (required on patent land purchased from BLM).

#### **Financial Assurance Recalculation**

11. Financial assurances shall be recalculated each year in accordance with Section 2773.1(a)(3) of SMARA and the Inyo County Code. This shall occur at the time of annual inspection.

#### Release of Financial Assurances

12. As reclamation standards are achieved, the portion of financial assurances covering those areas of reclamation that are completed may be released. The remainder of financial assurances covering revegetation and monitoring shall not be released until the revegetation performance standards are met.

# **Compliance with County Code**

13. The applicant/operator shall conform to all applicable provisions of Inyo County Code, State laws and regulations, and Federal laws and regulations.

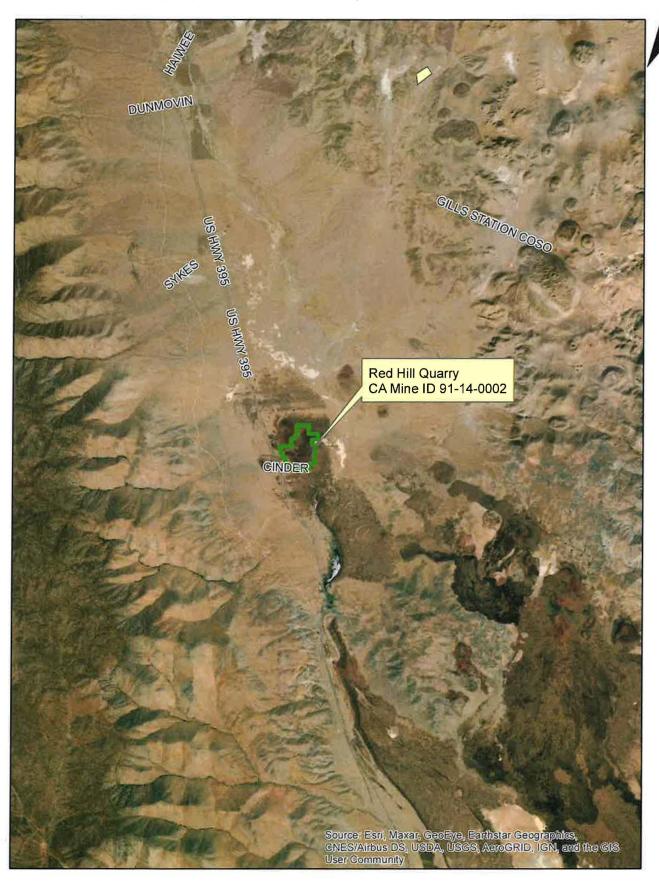
# **Hold Harmless**

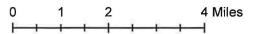
14. The applicant/operator shall defend, indemnify, and hold harmless Inyo County, its agents, officers, and employees from any claim, action, or proceeding to attack, set aside, void, or annul any approval of the County, its advisory agencies, its appeals board, or legislative body concerning CUP 1978-09 and Reclamation Plan 78-02. The County reserves the right to prepare its own defense.

# Attachments:

- A. Vicinity Map
- B. Existing Reclamation plan

# Amendment to CUP1978-09; and REC Plan 78-02 N







Recording requested by and return to: Planning Department 168 North Edwards Street Post Office Drawer L Independence, California 93526

Phone: (760) 878-0263

E-Mail: inyoplanning@Inyocounty.us

Michele J. Hartshorn Co Recorder Office

DOC- 2021-0001966-00 Thursday, MAY 27, 2021 09:17:15 NFE \$0.00::

Notice of Reclamation Approval To regulate surface mining and assure reclamation when surface mining has ceased

Subject:

Filing of Notice of Reclamation Plan Approval in compliance with Public Resources

Code 2772.7. Mining operations conducted on the hereinafter described real property are subject to a reclamation plan approved by the Inyo County, a copy of which is on file

Ttl Pd

with the Planning Department.

Project Title:

Amendment to Conditional Use Permit 1978-09; amendment to Reclamation Plan 78-02.

Project Applicant:

Twin Mountain Rock Venture LLC. 11374 Tuxford Street Sun Valley, CA 91352

**Property Owner:** 

Angelus Block Company, Inc.

Mine Identification

Number:

91-14-0002

**Project Legal** 

Description:

The project (mine) site is located approximately 12 miles south of Olancha, on the east side of US 395, near Coso Junction in Inyo County, California. The mine is located within sections 30 and 31, Township 22S North, Range 38E, Mount Diablo Meridian. The Site is accessed from US 395, east onto Cider Road approximately 1 mile to the

mining site. On- Assessor Parcel # 037-090-11.

**Project Action:** 

Planning Commission approved Amendment to Conditional Use Permit (CUP) 1978-09;

amendment to Reclamation Plan 78-02 May 26, 2021. The reclamation plan is attached

for recording required by SMARA.

**Project Contact** 

Person:

Ryan Standridge, Associate Planner/SMARA Coordinator, 760-878-0405

Associate Planner/SMARA Coordinator,

Lead Agency:

Inyo County

Planning Department

Inyo County Planning Department

Title

# REVISED MINE RECLAMATION PLAN FOR THE RED HILL QUARRY CA MINE ID: 91-14-0002

Prepared For:
Twin Mountain Rock Ventures L.L.C.
11374 Tuxford Street
Sun Valley, CA 91352

Submitted To:
County of Inyo
Planning Department
168 North Edwards Street
Independence, California 93526

Prepared By:
Lilburn Corporation
1905 Business Center Drive
San Bernardino, California 92408

Updated January 2021

# Attachment

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

|        |        |   | PAGE |
|--------|--------|---|------|
|        | INR    | ODUCTION AND BACKGROUND   | 1    |
| 1.0    | MIN    | IING PLAN   | 8    |
|        | 1.1    | Mining Operations   |      |
|        | 1.2    | Mine Waste  |      |
|        | 1.3    | Ore Processing  |      |
|        | 1.4    | Production Water  |      |
|        | 1.5    | Erosion and Sedimentation Control   | 15   |
|        | 1.6    | Blasting  | 15   |
| 2.0    | REC    | LAMATION PLAN   |      |
|        | 2.1    | Land Use  |      |
|        | 2.2    | Visibility  |      |
|        | 2.3    | Vegetation  | 16   |
|        | 2,4    | Wildlife  | 17   |
|        | 2.5    | Reclamation   |      |
|        | 2.6    | Revegetation  |      |
|        | 2.7    | Cleanup   | 23   |
|        | 2.8    | Post Reclamation and Future Mining  |      |
|        | 2.9    | Slope and Slope Treatment   |      |
|        | 2.10   | Ponds, Wastes   |      |
|        | 2.11   | Soils   |      |
|        | 2.12   | Drainage and Erosion Controls   |      |
|        | 2.13   | Public Safety   | 25   |
|        | 2.14   | Monitoring and Maintenance  |      |
|        | 2.15   | Reclamation Assurance   | 25   |
| 3.0    | GEO    | LOGY  | 26   |
| 4.0    | HYD    | ROLOGY  | 28   |
|        | REFE   | ERENCES AND ACRONYMS  | 29   |
|        |        | ERENCE MATRIX arry Mine Reclamation Plan & Surface Mining and Reclamation Act | 31   |
|        |        |   |      |
| LIST   |        | GURES   |      |
| Figure |        | egional Location Map.   |      |
| Figure | e 2 Pi | roject Vicinity Map   | 3    |
| Figure |        | line Plan   |      |
| Figure |        | ross Sections   |      |
| Figure |        | eclamation Plan   |      |
| Figure | e 6 G  | eologic Map   | 27   |

#### Attachment

| T | Δ | RI | I.F. | OF | CO | NT | FN | ITS |
|---|---|----|------|----|----|----|----|-----|
|   | н | DI |      | Ur |    |    |    |     |

#### LIST OF TABLES

| Table I | Planned Mine Site Areas and Phases              | 11 |
|---------|---|----|
| Table 2 | Typical Quarry and Plant Mobile Equipment       |    |
| Table 3 | Summary of Global Stability Results             |    |
| Table 4 | Typical Process Plant Equipment (or equivalent) |    |

#### **APPENDICES**

- A Biological Resource Assessment Jericho Systems Inc. April 2018
- B Slope Stability Evaluation Report Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry, Terracon Consultants, Inc.
- C Record of Survey J.E. Miller & Associates

# **MAP SHEETS (attached)**

- 1 Mine Plan
- 2 Reclamation Plan
- 3 Cross Sections

#### PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS

# Slope Stability (Appendix B)

The California Professional Geologist/Certified Engineering Geologist and the California Certified Engineering Geologist, Slope Stability Evaluation Report for the Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry prepared by Terracon Consultants, Inc. (June 2020) (attached as Appendix B) for Angeles Block Company and Lilburn Corporation.

John S. McKeown, E.G. 758550HAL g.

Authorized Project Review

Jayl J. Martin, C.E.G.1529

Principal 1

# Land Survey (Appendix C and Sheet 3 of3)

California Professional Land Surveyor (PLS) - Joseph E. Miller L.S. 5803:

# SURVEYOR'S STATEMENT

THIS MAP CORRECTLY REPRESENTS A SURVEY WAS BY WE OR LINDER MY DIRECTION IN CONFORMANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE PROFESSIONAL LAND SURVEYORS' ACT AT THE REQUEST OF LILEUS OF DIRECTION NOVEMBER, 2020.

12/18/20

# Aerial Mapping/Topography



11402 N. CAVE CREEK ROAD PHOENIX, AZ 85020 Ph (602) 678-5111 FX (602) 678-5228

THIS MAP HAS BEEN PRODUCED ACCORDING TO PROCEDURES THAT COMPLY WITH NATIONAL STANDARD FOR SPATIAL DATA ACCURACY (NSSDA) FOR A CONTOUR INTERVAL OF 1-FOOT AND A MAP SCALE OF 1"= 100".

DASH CONTOURS INSIDE VEGETATED AREAS AND SHADOW OUTLINED AREA MAY: NOT MEET MAPPING STANDARDS AND SHOULD BE FIELD CHECKED

THIS COMPUTER PLOTTED MAP WAS GENERATED FROM DATA COMPILED BY DIGITAL STEREO METHODS USING AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY TAKEN ON JANUARY 10, 2015.

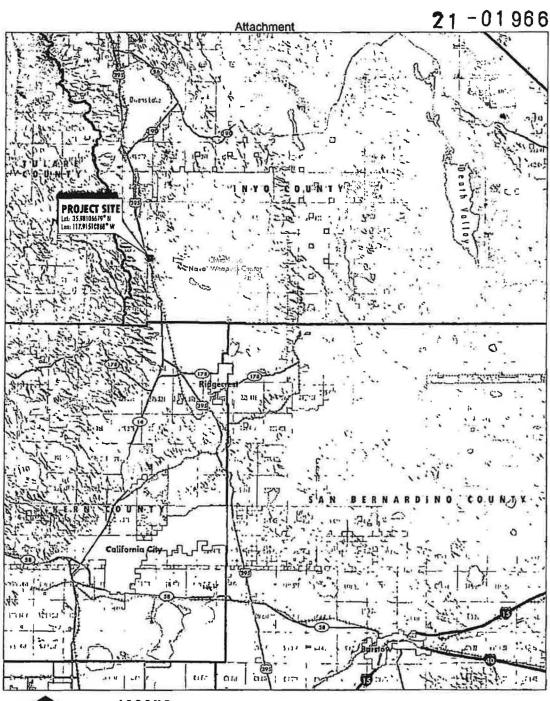
# REVISED MINING RECLAMATION PLAN FOR THE RED HILL QUARRY CUP 78-9; CA MINE ID No. 91-14-0002

#### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Twin Mountain Rock Venture L.L.C. (TMRV) is submitting an application for a revision to an existing approved Mining Reclamation Plan (Conditional Use Permit - CUP 78-9) for the Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID No. 91-14-0002). Red Hill Quarry is owned in its entirety by Angelus Block Company since 2015 and TMRV is the mine operator. The proposed revised Mining Reclamation Plan (Plan) will include updating the current plans, completing mining in the Main Quarry and extending mining to the northeast away from US 395 in order to utilize the on-site cinder reserves. The existing and proposed mining activities are and will be undertaken on its privately-owned property of approximately 297 acres; patented in the years 2000 and 2007. The Plan will include updated reclamation methods per the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) implemented by the County of Inyo (County) within County Code Chapter 7.70 Surface Mining and Land Reclamation.

Red Hill Quarry is located approximately 12 miles south of Olancha on the east side of US 395 in Inyo County, California (see Figure 1 - Regional Location Map). The mine is within Sections 30 and 31, Township 22S North, Range 38E, Mount Diablo Meridian. The site is accessed from US 395, east onto Cinder Road approximately one mile to the mine site gate on the east side of the site (see Figure 2 - Vicinity Map). Red Hill Quarry produces red and black cinder rock and sands crushed and screened to various sizes, densities, and colors depending on product demand. The sized cinder materials are mostly trucked to its Angelus Block facilities in southern California as a component of cinder blocks used for construction. In addition, materials are used for landscaping, soil amendment, de-icing of roads, and other uses. Production has averaged around 55,000 tons per year and is increasing.

The original Plan (CUP 78-9) was approved by the County in May 1979 with mining and excavation restricted to the then revised Phase 1 excavation area of approximately 116 acres within an overall mine site of approximately 160 acres. This was conditioned by the County so that there would be no mining taking place on the Red Hill Cone proper nor would it be visible from US 395. Currently approximately 152 acres are reported as disturbed requiring future reclamation. The current land owner, Angelus Block, purchased 100% of the site in 2015 and the operator under the land owner is Twin Mountain Rock Venture. The mining operation is in good standing with the County and state having submitted annual reports and annual updated Financial Assurance Cost Estimates (FACEs) to cover reclamation costs. A Financial Assurance Mechanism (FAM) of \$338,860 is on file with the County and State. The County annually inspects the site and no violations have been noted.







# LEGEND

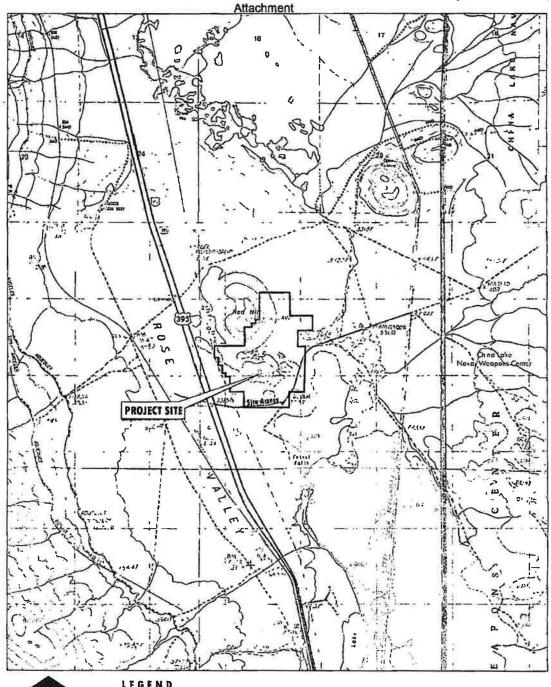


County Line
BLM Land
Military Land
National Park Service Land
CA State Land
USGS Township and Range

# **REGIONAL LOCATION**

Red Hill Cinder Mine County of Inyo, CA

FIGURE 1





LILBURN CORPORATION LEGEND



# **PROJECT VICINITY**

Red Hill Cinder Mine County of Inyo, CA

FIGURE 2

At the time of the original approval in 1979, the site consisted of a number of unpatented claims on public federal lands under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). In the years 2000 and 2007, two claims were issued patents on a total of 297 acres. The Assessor's Parcel Number (APN) for the entire private property is 037-090-11. These areas are now privately held lands owned by Angelus Block and are considered the overall property boundary. In addition, Angelus Block holds 330 acres of unpatented claims on Federal lands surrounding the patented areas. The patented and unpatented claims are listed below and are shown on Figure 3, Mine Plan.

#### Patented Claim Legal Land Description and Acreage (see Figure 3):

- 1. Patent Number 04-2001-0030 178.59 acres
  - Mount Diablo Meridian, T.22S. R.38E., Section 31, Lots 3 and 12, W ½ NE ¼ NE ¼, W ½ NE ¼ NE ¼ NE ¼ NE ¼
- 2. Patent Number 04-2007-0002 118.22 acres

#### **Unpatented Placer Claims**

There are four unpatented placer claims, Volcanic Metallite 1, 2, 3, & 4, that surround the west, north, and east sides of the Red Hill Quarry site. No operations take place or are proposed on unpatented claims on public federal lands managed by the BLM.

- 1. CAMC 38426 Volcanic Metallite 1; SW1/4 Section 30; Location Date: 9/15/48; 140 ac
- 2. CAMC 38427 Volcanic Metallite 2; NW1/4 Section 31; Location Date: 9/15/48; 70 ac
- 3. CAMC 38428 Volcanic Metallite 3; NE1/4 Section 31: Location Date: 9/15/48; 50 ac
- 4. CAMC 38429 Volcanic Metallite 4: SE1/4 Section 30: Location Date: 9/15/48; 70 ac

The 1979 Mining Conditional Use Permit and Reclamation Plan (CUP 78-9) contemplated approximately 40 years of mining within Phase 1. This current application and Plan is requesting the continuation of operations and concurrent and subsequent reclamation for up to 100 years to extend mining to 2121 and reclamation to 2123. Production was not limited in the 1979 CUP. Recent production has averaged approximately 55,000 tons per year (tpy). This Plan proposes an average permitted production level of 75,000 to 125,000 tpy with a maximum of 150,000 tpy based on approximately 750 tons per day (tpd), 200 days per year.

The mine site is located on the south and east side of the Red Hill Cinder Cone. County approvals in 1979 restricted any mining activities on the Red Hill Cone proper to limit visual impacts. The proposed revisions have incorporated the existing restrictions into its future plan. No new mining or mining activities will take place on the cone proper per the existing CUP 78-9 nor will additional mining be seen from US 395.



#### Attachment

Operator

Twin Mountain Rock Venture L.L.C.

11374 Tuxford Street Sun Valley, CA 91352

818-767-8576 blockbiz@angelusblock.com

Land Owner:

Angelus Block Company, INC.

11374 Tuxford Street Sun Valley, CA 91352

818-767-8576 blockbiz@angelusblock.com

Representative:

Jack Patel

Angelus Block Company 11374 Tuxford Street Sun Valley, CA 91352

818-767-8576 jpatel@angelusblock.com

Lilburn Corporation (mining consultant)

Martin Derus

1905 Business Center Drive San Bernardino, California 92408 909/890-1818 marty@lilburncorp.com

General Plan Designation: Open Space and Recreation (OSR)

Zoning: OS-40

APN: 037-090-11

Existing Disturbed (2020): 152 acres

Existing Permitted in 1979: 160 acres

Proposed Total Mine Area: 198 acres

Area to be Reclaimed: 198 acres

Start-Up Date: In operation under existing permits

Estimated Operating Life: 100 years (or until June 30, 2121)

Estimated Mining Termination Date: June 30, 2121

Estimated Reclamation Completion: June 30, 2123

Reclaimed End Uses: Open space with reclaimed landforms

#### **Project Objectives**

TMRV's objectives for this revised mining project is to continue to provide cinders to supply raw material for its cinder block production and to research other uses for the cinder and cinder sand for landscaping. The following objectives have been incorporated into the revised Plan:

- 1) To develop the cinder resource that meets County Code Chapter 7.70 Surface Mining and Land Reclamation (SMARA) and conditions currently within the existing CUP 78-9;
- 2) To mine the cinder resource to the south and east of the Red Hill Cinder Cone without impacting the cone proper and to screen mining activities from viewers on US 395;
- To secure cinder reserves in order to provide a reliable and economic source for its cinder block production needs (off-site), highway paving, road de-icing, landscaping, soil amendment, and other uses;
- 4) To provide for an average permitted production level of 75,000 to 125,000 tpy with a maximum of 150,000 tpy based on approximately 750 tpd, 200 days per year for up to 100 years;
- 5) To reclaim the site for a post-mining use of open space habitat;
- To contour mining features and revegetate disturbed areas to minimize aesthetic and erosional impacts; and
- To reclaim and maintain the site as necessary to eliminate hazards to public health and safety.

#### 1.0 MINING PLAN

#### 1.1 MINING OPERATIONS

Please refer to Figures 3 and 4 and Sheets 1 and 3 to review the Mine Plan and Cross Sections and Table 1 for a listing of the phases and facilities' existing and proposed areas. Mining operations will be undertaken in four phases with time frames dependent on production needs and material quality and quantity. Phases 1, 2 and 3 are essentially implementing the existing 1979 CUP and its conditions of approval. Phase 4 will extend mining to the northeast by 35.5 acres; east of the cinder cone proper in the future. Total area expansion will be approximately 46 acres. The conditions of approval relevant to ongoing and future operations being implemented by TMRV include among others:

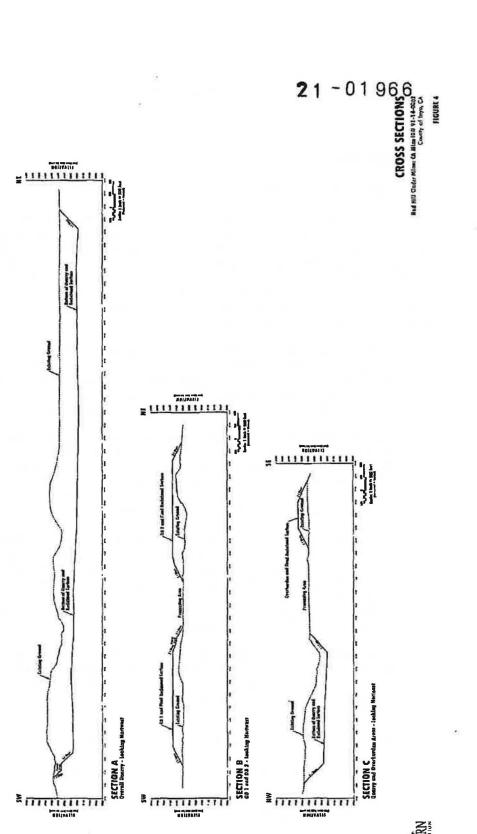
- 2. All processing plant activities shall be located on the eastern side of the site.

  The processing plant including a cinder aggregate crushing/screening operation will remain in the southeastern area for the duration of the project, hidden from surrounding views by the perimeter berm and overburden stockpiles. The office area and scale (and eventually the shop) are located on the far east side of the site, out of sight of US 395.
- 4. A security fence shall be constructed around the perimeter of the Phase I area. Said fence shall at a minimum be 3-strand barbed wire construction.
  Fencing consisting of 4-strand smooth wire, is located on the west, south, and east sides of the mine site with a locked gated entrance on the east side of the property. In addition, TMRV has warning signs along the said fence approximately every 500 feet. The fencing will be extended to surround the Phases 2 and 4 mining perimeters.
- 5. A periphery berm shall be constructed in accordance with the specifications in the FEIR. The berm is to be an irregular feature which incorporates to the greatest extent possible existing partially revegetated debris piles from former mining operations. The berm is generally constructed from the southwest area around the southern perimeter to near the east side access gate. The berm will be maintained per this condition. In addition, the perimeter berm will be extended from north of the access gate for approximately 500 feet prior to re-locating the shop to this location in Phase 3.
- 6. Areas which are not disturbed and that contain any top soil shall be scraped and the top soil spread on the top and sides of the berms to promote revegetation.

  This will continue to be implemented. However, all proposed mining in this Plan will be located on existing mining areas and on barren volcanic sands with no top soil or vegetation.
- 7. The sides of the open pit shall be maintained at a slope of 1:1 or less except in those areas being mined.

This will continue to be implemented. Open pits will be reclaimed or mined at 1:1 or less steep within cinder; where existing cut slopes are steeper than 1:1, slopes shall be flattened to 1:1 in cinder or backfilled to 2:1 per the findings of the slope stability evaluation (Terracon 2020).





Attachment

Currently mining is taking place within the Phase I Main Quarry of approximately 49 acres as approved in the 1979 CUP and will continue for up to 60 years. Active slopes may be as steep as 0.5 horizontal to 1 vertical (0.5H:1V) and cut back within cinder as feasible to a reclaimed slope of no more than 1H:1V as required by the current CUP or pushed down or backfilled with non-commercial material to 2H:1V as recommended by Terracon. Maximum depth will be approximately 150 feet below ground surface (bgs) with a variable pit floor averaging approximately 3,250 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Phase 2 mining is planned in a small northwestern 8.5-acre extension of the Main Quarry with 1.5H:1V slopes connecting to the Main Quarry. Mining on the west side of the Main Quarry will be below grade, remain behind natural ridging and further blocked by views from US 395 by an approximate 10-foot high berm along the west areas as shown on the Mine Plan and as required by the existing CUP.

During Phase 3, Overburden Stockpile 3 of about 14 acres and approximately 50 feet in height will be pushed down into the floor of the Main Quarry and the raw cinders underneath will be mined to about 150 feet bgs. Mining of the site is achieved with a dozer that pushes the cinder from higher to lower levels where a loader operates at the active quarry floor or bench. The cinder is stockpiled by the dozer and the loader transfers material from the temporary stockpiles or directly from mined material and loads it into the feeder hopper for initial crushing and screening. The screened material is transported by conveyor out of the pit to the process plant area for further crushing and screening. In the past, large off-road mine haul trucks moved the material out to of the pit to the plant and resulted in excessive diesel exhaust emissions and noise; in addition, the costs for operating and maintaining the trucks was excessive.

The mining and loading of material on-site is conducted by the following equipment which may change over time: one dozer, two loaders, dump truck, and a 3,000-gallon water truck (see Table 2). No additional equipment is needed to increase production in the future. Note that the primary crusher and screen and conveyors are portable and are moved within the quarry to be adjacent to the active mining area. Processing equipment is permitted with the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District (GBUAPCD) as required.

Material mined, crushed and screened in the quarry and at the processing plant is sorted into stockpiles of various sizes and color and loaded directly into street-legal 27-ton haul trucks (or similar) for shipment off-site. Non-spec or non-commercial material, that is, unwanted material that does not meet various product specifications, is conveyed into overburden stockpiles. Overburden Stockpile 1 (OB1) is located in the southcentral portion of the site on about 26 acres. Material is stockpiled up to about 50 feet with 2H:1V slopes, is colored red to black, and will be contoured to blend into the overall area. Overburden material will also be used to backfill the Overburden Stockpile 2 (OB2) area of approximately 23 acres, which was partially mined in the past and consists of a series of cuts and ridges. Overburden will fill the site and may reach up to 50 feet from the existing surface with 2H:1V slopes. The overburden will be colored red to black and will be contoured to blend into the overall area.

Overburden Stockpile 3 (OB3) is located to the northeast of the Main Quarry on about 14 acres. As mining is completed on the northeast side of the Main Quarry, the overburden material will be pushed into the Main Quarry for permanent storage and reclamation. This will be completed in Phase 3 followed by mining of the cinder under OB3. Eventually OB3 will be eliminated and

Table 1
Red Hill Quarry

| Mine Facility  | Phase 1 | Phase 2 | Phase 3                                      | Phase 4                       |
|--|---------|---------|--|-------------------------------|
| Offices/Scales   | 1.6     | 1.6     | 1.6  | 1.6                           |
| Plant & Product Stockpiles   | 4.6     | 4.6     | 4.6  | 4.6                           |
| Shop Area  | 2.1     | 2.1     | -2.1<br>(to be mined)<br>+1.9<br>(relocated) | 1.9                           |
| Main Quarry  | 48.6    | 48.6    | 50,7   | 50.7                          |
| Overburden Stockpile 1<br>(OB1)  | 26.4    | 26.4    | 26.4   | 26.4                          |
| Overburden Stockpile 2<br>(OB2)  | 22.7    | 22.7    | 22.7   | 22.7                          |
| Overburden Stockpile 3<br>(OB3)  | 13.7    | 13.7    | (-13.7)                                      | 0                             |
| Main Quarry NW<br>Extension  | ***     | 8.5     | 8.5  | 8.5                           |
| Main Quarry NE Extension<br>(former OB3)   | 1955    |         | 13.7<br>(new mining<br>under OB3)            | 13.7                          |
| Northeast Quarry   |         |         |  | 35.5                          |
| Other Operational Areas /<br>Setbacks / Roads / Berms<br>(not entirely impacted) | 32.4    | 32.4    | 32.4   | 32.4                          |
| Subtotal of<br>Developed Areas   | 152     | 160.5   | 162.4  | 197.9<br>(+45.9<br>expansion) |
| Areas to<br>Remain Undisturbed   | 145     | 136.5   | 134.6  | 99.1                          |
| Total Overall Project Area   | 297     | 297     | 297  | 297                           |

Source: TMRV, Lilburn May 2018

Table 2
Typical Quarry and Plant Mobile Equipment

| Equipment  | Typical Number | Purpose   |  |  |
|--|----------------|---|--|--|
| Dozers I   |                | Removal of topsoil and overburden. Construction and maintenance of access roads.                          |  |  |
| Off-road haul or Dump Trucks Transportation of material on-site from quarry to poverburden stockpiles. |                | Transportation of material on-site from quarry to plant or overburden stockpiles.                         |  |  |
| Motor Grader   | 1              | Maintain roads on-site.   |  |  |
| Front-End<br>Loaders   | 2-3            | Loading cinders into feed hopper at excavation and loading street-legal haul trucks for off-site transfer |  |  |
| Water truck  |                | Water for spraying, haul roads, stockpiles, and general dust suppression at site.                         |  |  |

Source: TMRV Red Hill, 2018

the area will become part of the Main Quarry. In addition, the existing shop area would be removed and relocated to the north of the administration area.

During Phase 4, mining will be initiated in the Northeast Quarry area located on approximately 35.5 acres. The quarry will be setback a minimum of 50 feet on the project boundaries to the east and north and setback about 100 feet from the base of the Red Hill Cinder Cone proper and from vegetated areas as mapped by the biological consultant. Safety berms 10-feet high with warning signs every 500 feet will be established on the west, north, and east sides for public safety. The pit will be mined and reclaimed with 1H:1V slopes to a depth of approximately 150 feet below ground surface (bgs) or 3,180 feet amsl.

Terracon prepared a *Slope Stability Evaluation Report for the Red Hill Quarry (June 2020)* (see Appendix B) to assess the cut and fill slopes at the quarry. The results of global slope stability analyses determined that slopes in native cut at 1H:1V up to 160 feet and overburden slopes of 2H:1V up to 60 feet are sufficient to meet factors of safety (FS) in excess of 1.5 static and seismic factors of safety at or greater than 1.1 (see Table 3).

Table 3
Summary of Global Stability Results

| Model                        | Materials  | Slope Configuration                | Static Factor of Safety | Seismic Factor of Safety (k=0.2) |  |
|------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Native Cut                   | cinder     | 160 feet @ I(h) to I(v)<br>45 deg. | 1.90                    | 1.42                             |  |
| Backfill Slope               | Waste rock | 60 feet @ l(h) to l(v)<br>45 deg.  | 1.00                    | 0.73                             |  |
| Backfill Slope (Recommended) | Waste rock | 60 feet @ 2(h) to I(v)<br>27 deg.  | 1.68                    | 1.14                             |  |
| Overburden<br>Stockpile      | Mixed OB   | 60 feet @ 27 deg. Fill<br>slope    | 1.71                    | 1,12                             |  |

Source: Slope Stability Evaluation Report for Red Hill Quarry, Appendix B, page 7. Terracon June 2020

The planned backfill slope configured at 1(H):1(V) does not exhibit sufficient Factors of Safety under static and seismic conditions for use in reclamation according to DMR. Therefore, an alternative model using backfill at 2(H:1(V) was analyzed and determined to meet recommended factors of safety. Therefore, any final quarry slopes that cannot be flattened to 1H:1V by cutting into native basalt and cinder shall be backfilled at 2H:1(V).

The Terracon report reported that static groundwater was encountered at approximately 187 feet bgs in a drill hole located near the western site boundary in 2015. Information available in California Department of Water Resources Water Data Library indicates a well located about 1 mile east of the site with Local ID 18-28 GTH. Measured water levels between October 2011 and March 2020 in this well were steady near elevation 3,194 feet that correlates to a depth to water of about 172 feet bgs. Based on the 150-foot depth of planned mining, groundwater is not anticipated to occur within the depth of the proposed mining excavations.

Site operations are typically conducted from 5 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., four to five days a week but could occur for longer hours depending on demand during daylight hours only. No nighttime, Sunday, or holiday operations will be conducted. Shipping is limited to Monday morning at 5 a.m. to Friday afternoon at 3:30 p.m. with occasional shipping on Saturdays.

Production for the past few years has averaged approximately 50,000 to 55,000 tpy. This amounts to approximately 250 tpd, 200 days/ year and 10 trucks per day carrying 25 to 27 tons each. Angelus Block is planning to eventually produce up an average of 75,000 to 125,000 tons per year with a maximum of 150,000 tpy based on approximately 750 tpd, 200 days per year and 30 trucks per day. Based on the large volume of available material (approximately 19 million cubic yards or 12.5 million tons), TMRV is requesting to permit operations for up to 100 years.

On occasion, a dozer or grader may be used on-site for road maintenance. To minimize dust generation, a water truck is retained for use during mining, stockpiling and loading of haul trucks prior to them departing from the site. The mine operator shall water spray working mine areas and access roads on a regular basis and more frequently as needed during windy conditions. Water used for dust control is pumped from an on-site well. Un-surfaced haul roads and access roads shall be maintained with water sprays or covered with road base material as needed. In general, the on-site roads graded into the volcanic gravels and sands are not highly erosive. All refuse is disposed into approved trash bins and removed by a commercial vendor. Portable toilets are used on-site and serviced by a commercial vendor.

Note that the perimeter road known as Cinder Road on the south and east of the site is utilized by haul trucks partially within the site's private property. It is paved on public lands for approximately 0.25 miles east of US 395 then is within Angelus Block's private land until the road passes the mine site's entrance on the east. This road is open to the public to access public lands managed by the BLM including the Fossil Falls Scenic Area. During mining operations, TMRV maintains that portion of the road within its property that visitors utilize to access Fossil Falls Scenic Area as well as recreational areas to the east.

#### 1.2 MINE WASTE

Tailings or waste from mineral processing are not produced on-site. Overburden is really non-spec material, that is, unwanted material that does not meet various product specifications. Approximately 50% of the excavated material is non-spec material to be placed in the overburden stockpiles and filled into completed sections of the Main Quarry. It is conveyed either directly into the overburden stockpiles or from the crushing/screening plant. Equipment and vehicle maintenance is conducted in the shop building on concrete floors. Maintenance and refueling complies with all rules and regulations with regard to implementing proper fueling procedures, fuel and waste oil storage, and spill control measures and employee training per their Emergency Response Plans and Procedures on file with the Inyo County Environmental Health Services (EHS). EHS is the Certified Unified Program Agency (CUPA) that oversees hazardous materials storage, use, generation and disposal.

# 1.3 ORE PROCESSING

The cinder material is loaded into a feeder at the active mining location directly and conveyed to the crushing/screening plant located in the southeastern portion of the site. The processing facility and product stockpiles are located on about 8.5 acres that may vary with product stockpile areas. The processing plant consists of 2 cone crushers, 3 screens, 16 conveyors, 5 stacker conveyors, and a 5,000-gallon water tank for dust suppression. The plant is permitted with the GBUAPCD with a set of conditions including among others, limiting production to no more 190 tons/hour, use of a water spray fog system, and speed limits of 25 mph. The site also has a 2,000-gallon aboveground gasoline tank and a 12,000-gallon diesel fuel tank located on a concrete pad with a containment berm permitted with the GBUAPCD at the shop site in the existing north central area. An administration site is located on the east central side at the access gate with three office structures (two converted rail cars) used for administration, employee facility, and storage and a truck scale, and vehicle and equipment parking areas. Refer to Table 4 for a general list of on-site facilities.

Table 4
Typical Process Plant Equipment (or equivalent)

| Plant Equipment                         | Number (Approx.)            | Purpose   |  |
|---|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Crushing and screening plant            | ı                           | 2 Nordberg cone crushers and 3 screens. Crushes<br>and sizes material; permitted with GBUAPCD<br>#559-03-15 |  |
| Conveyors/stackers                      | 16 conveyors;<br>5 stackers | Conveys sized material within plant and into stockpiles; part of air permit above.                          |  |
| Metal shop                              | 1                           | 70' x 40'   |  |
| Storage containers                      | 2                           | 40' x 10' metal   |  |
| Fuel tanks                              | 2                           | I-12,000 gal. dicsel & I-2,000 gal. gasoline<br>located on concrete pad approx. 90' x 25'                   |  |
| Portable water tanks                    | 1                           | 1 - 10,000 gallons; 1 attached to plant 5,000 gallons   |  |
| Truck Scale                             | I                           | Weighs trucks   |  |
| Office trailers (2 converted rail cars) | 4                           | Adm., employees' breakroom, storage   |  |

Note that listed plant equipment is typical and will change with time.

The portable crushing and screening plant currently processes and is permitted to process up to 190 tons/hour. The current daily rate for one 10-hour shift is an average of approximately 250 tons/day (tpd), 200 days/year for a total of approximately 50,000 tons/year. The finished product is loaded by loaders into street-legal 25 to 27-ton haul trucks for transportation off-site.

This Revision proposes to mine and process up to an average of 750 tpd, 200 days/year to produce 150,000 tpy 4 days per week, 200 days/year. The existing plant will increase its hourly and daily production; however, it is expected that operational hours will generally remain at four-ten hour days possibly extending to five days/week with some shipping occasionally on Saturdays. Operations will not be conducted on Sundays and holidays. Plant and equipment maintenance may be conducted outside normal operating hours.

#### Attachment

Power to run the plant and for all other needs is provided by commercial power from Southern California Edison (SCE). No portable generators are used on-site.

# 1.4 PRODUCTION WATER

Water is supplied from an existing on-site well on the west-southwest side of the site. A second well is located to the east of the administration area. Its non-potable water is pumped into a portable 10,000-gallon water tank located at the plant site and a 5,000-gallon tank for the plant equipment's water spray dust control. Water use on-site is utilized to minimize dust generation. A water truck is used for wetting down material and roads during mining activities. Approximately 12,000 gallons of water a day may be used for dust suppression activities on approximately 200 days per year which amounts to approximately 7.5 acre-feet annually. It is not anticipated that there will be any excess water from the wetting-down procedure as the sprayed water is absorbed by loose materials, or by the porous surface, or evaporates; therefore, no recycling is required or planned. Bottled water is provided for employees. Wastewater is handled with a septic system located in the administrative area and/or maintained portable restrooms.

#### 1.5 EROSION AND SEDIMENTATION CONTROL

The project site is composed of volcanic cinder gravels and sands. This material is very porous and there are no drainages or impervious surfaces on-site. Erosion has never been an issue of concern on-site.

If erosion is evident on-site, the operator will implement measures to control surface runoff to protect surrounding lands in a manner commensurate with modern engineering practice. They may include, but not limited to, larger rock, drainage ditches, straw mulch, hay bales, sediment containment basins, and localized control and maintenance measures to intercept and control disturbed area drainage. If any rills or gullies in excess of 8 square inches in cross sectional area and more than 10 linear feet form on final slopes, they shall be arrested using larger volcanic rock, rock mulch, and any damage to the drainage system will be repaired within one month of observation. Access roads and mined surfaces will be sprayed as necessary to reduce wind erosion.

#### 1.6 BLASTING

There is and will be no blasting conducted on this project site, therefore, no explosives will be used or stored on site.

#### 2.0 RECLAMATION PLAN

#### 2.1 LAND USE

The Red Hill Quarry is located approximately 12 miles south of Olancha on the east side of US 395 in Inyo County, California Red Hill Quarry is located on 297 acres of privately held lands. Approximately 152 acres are disturbed by past mining operations. The proposed mining would mostly be in currently disturbed areas and would eventually extend to the northeast onto barren volcanic sands on about 35 acres, up to 150 feet deep. The mining areas range in elevations from 3,250 to 3,480 amsl. The surface of the entire site mined and to be mined is cinder void of vegetation with no overburden or top soil.

The surrounding land uses are as follows:

North Public lands managed by the BLM and consist of vacant high desert open space. Directly northwest is Red Hill Cinder Cone.

South Public lands consisting of Fossil Falls Scenic Area managed by the BLM. Unique geologic site and campground. Shares access road which crosses mine property.

East Public lands managed by the BLM and consists of vacant high desert open space with dry sandy playas.

Public lands managed by the BLM and consists of vacant high desert open space. US 395 is located less than 0,25 miles west.

#### 2.2 VISIBILITY

West

The mine site is located to the south and east of the Red Hill Cinder Cone, a highly visible landmark along US 395 and the lower Owens Valley that rises approximately 600 feet in elevation. The current in-place 1979 CUP restricted mining on the Red Hill Cone proper and includes a condition that all processing plant activities shall be located on the eastern side of the site. The existing processing plant will remain in the southeastern area for the duration of the project, hidden from surrounding views by the perimeter berm and overburden stockpiles. The office area and scale (and eventually the shop building) are located on the far east side of the site, out of sight of US 395. In addition, the existing and planned mining areas will not impact the Red Hill Cone proper. Future mining will take place within the existing mine areas to the south and eventually expand to the northeast on the level volcanic sands to the east of the cone.

#### 2.3 VEGETATION

Jericho Systems Inc. conducted biological surveys on the project area. Refer to Appendix A for additional detailed information on vegetation. Upon review of the biological data and the potential to disturb Mojave ground squirrel (Xerospermophilus mohavensis) habitat, the planned mine areas were reduced and eliminated any areas with vegetation. New planned mining will

only be proposed to the northeast on 35.5 acres on an area of volcanic sands devoid of vegetation. The existing mining area and facilities are also mostly devoid of vegetation.

The general project vicinity consists of the existing mining operations (Red Hill Quarry) and undeveloped open space. The planned project area itself is devoid of vegetation, consisting entirely of cinder sand and gravel. Habitat surrounding the project site consists primarily of Ambrosia dumosa Shrubland Alliance (white bursage scrub). The scrub habitat within the property site outside of the existing and planned mining areas is dominated by allscale saltbush (A. polycarpa), where this habitat is present in the northern portion of the property site. However, this habitat is more species diverse toward the southern/southwestern portion of the property site where it is co-dominated by allscale saltbush, white bursage (Ambrosia dumosa) and cheesebush (Ambrosia salsola). Other native plant species identified within the property area include Devil's lettuce (Amsinckia tessellata), Fremont's milk vetch (Astragalus lentiginosus var. fremontii), shadescale (Atriplex confertifolia), Mojave eriastrum (Eriastrum densifolium ssp. mohavense), desert trumpet (Eriogonum inflatum), angle stemmed buckwheat (E. maculatum), yellow turbins (E. pusillum), kidney leaf buckwheat (E. reniforme), desert bush nettle (Eucnide urens), creosote (Larrea tridentata), desert star (Monoptilon bellidiforme), annual psathyrotes (Psathyrotes annua), sage thistle (Salvia carduacea), desert mallow (Sphaeralcea ambigua) and Mojave woodyaster (Xvlorhiza tortifolia). Additionally, the following two BLM Sensitive Plant Species have been documented in the project vicinity: creamy blazing star (Mentzelia tridentata) and Charlotte's phacelia (Phacelia nashiana).

Per the relevant literature and databases including the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), nine sensitive plant species have been documented in the Little Lake, Coso Junction, Cactus Peak and Volcano Peak USGS 7.5-minute series quadrangles. This list of sensitive species and habitats includes any State- and/or federally-listed threatened or endangered species, California Fully Protected species, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) designated Species of Special Concern (SSC), and otherwise Special Animals. All potential habitats for these species were evaluated on the property and a determination was made for the probability of presence (refer to Table 2 in Appendix A).

There are no State- or federally-listed plant species documented in the project vicinity. However, several sensitive plant species, including two BLM Sensitive Plants (creamy blazing star and Charlotte's phacelia) have been documented in the project vicinity. As previously discussed, the project site is generally unvegetated, consisting entirely of cinder sand and gravel, and all adjacent white bursage scrub habitat will be completely avoided. Therefore, the project will not impact any sensitive plant species that may occur within adjacent habitat communities.

#### 2.4 WILDLIFE

Jericho Systems Inc. conducted biological surveys on the project area. Refer to Appendix A for additional detailed information on wildlife. Upon review of the biological data and the potential to disturb Mojave ground squirrel habitat, the planned mine areas were reduced and eliminated any areas with vegetation. New planned mining will only be proposed to the northeast on 35.5 acres on an area of volcanic sands devoid of vegetation. The existing mining area and facilities are also mostly devoid of vegetation.

Per the CNDDB and other relevant literature and databases, 12 sensitive animal species have been documented in the Little Lake, Coso Junction, Cactus Peak and Volcano Peak USGS 7.5-minute series quadrangles. This list of sensitive species and habitats includes any State-and/or federally-listed threatened or endangered species, California Fully Protected species, CDFW designated SSC, and otherwise Special Animals. An analysis of the likelihood for occurrence of all CNDDB sensitive species documented in the area is provided in Appendix A, Table 2. This analysis considers species' range as well as documentation within the vicinity of the project area and includes the habitat requirements for each species and the potential for their occurrence on the site, based on required habitat elements and range relative to the current site conditions.

To avoid all potential impacts to sensitive species that could potentially occur within white bursage habitat, the planned project was modified to avoid disturbing any of the adjacent white bursage scrub habitat. The current proposed project footprint is completely within an unvegetated area that consists entirely of cinder sand and gravel. Therefore, the project will not impact any of the adjacent white bursage scrub habitat or sensitive species identified as potentially occurring within this habitat.

#### Threatened, Endangered, and Sensitive Animals

Two State- and/or federally-listed animal species have been documented in the project vicinity (within approximately 7 miles): Desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) and Mohave ground squirrel. Although not State- or federally-listed as threatened or endangered species, the golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos* [GOEA]) is a CDFW Fully Protected species and burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia* [BUOW]) are considered a State and federal SSC and both species are protected by the international treaty under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and by State law under the California FGC (FGC #3513 & #3503.5). These four species are discussed below.

#### Desert Tortoise - Threatened (State/Federal)

The desert tortoise is a federally and state Threatened species. The desert tortoise is typically found in creosote bush scrub, desert washes, and Joshua tree habitats. The project site is not within any United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) designated desert tortoise Critical Habitat nor within a BLM designated Desert Wildlife Management Area. Per the CNDDB, the nearest documented desert tortoise occurrence (2006) is approximately 6.4 miles northwest of the project site. There are no past desert tortoise occurrences documented in the project area and there is no suitable habitat for this species within the project site.

The result of the survey was that no evidence of desert tortoise was found in the survey area. No desert tortoise individuals or sign including burrows or scat were observed. Therefore, desert tortoise are considered absent from the project site.

# Mohave Ground Squirrel - Threatened (State)

The Mohave ground squirrel is a state Threatened species. It typically inhabits sandy soils of alkali sink and creosote bush scrub habitat. A Mohave ground squirrel habitat suitability assessment of the proposed project site and adjacent habitat was conducted. The habitat assessment included a pedestrian field assessment, review of reported occurrences of the Mohave

#### Attachment

ground squirrel in the region (CNDDB 2018), and adherence to CDFW's criteria for assessing potential impacts to the Mohave ground squirrel. The criteria questions are as follows:

- 1. Is the site within the range of the Mohave ground squirrel?;
- 2. Is there native habitat with a relatively diverse shrub component?; and
- 3. Is the site surrounded by development and therefore isolated from potentially occupied habitat?

The project site falls within the current range of the MGS but is located outside, to the east, of the Mohave ground squirrel Conservation Area set forth in the West Mojave Plan (BLM 2005). Per the CNDDB, there are 21 recent and historic Mohave ground squirrel occurrences documented in the Little Lake, Coso Junction, Cactus Peak and Volcano Peak quads. The nearest historically documented occurrence (1988) for Mohave ground squirrel is approximately 2 miles north of the project site. The nearest recently documented Mohave ground squirrel occurrence (2010) is approximately 8 miles northeast of the project site.

The planned project site consists of unvegetated cinder sand, which would not be considered suitable to support this species due to a lack of forage plants. However, some of the surrounding area adjacent portions of the project site does consist of white bursage scrub habitat that would be considered suitable to support Mohave ground squirrel. This habitat is mostly restricted to the areas adjacent the western portion of the site, around the base of the cinder cone, and adjacent the northernmost portion of the site, respectively. Furthermore, although the southern portion of the site is bordered by existing mining operations, there is undeveloped contiguous suitable habitat between the project site and documented Mohave ground squirrel occurrences to the north and east. Therefore, Mohave ground squirrel could potentially occur within areas of suitable habitat surrounding the project site, but there is no habitat on-site.

#### Golden Eagle - CDFW Fully Protected

The GOEA is a CDFW Fully Protected species. GOEA are found throughout North America, but are more common in western North America (CDFW 2017). Habitat typically consists of rolling foothills and mountain terrain, wide arid plateaus deeply cut by streams and canyons, open mountain slopes, and cliffs and rock outcrops.

Per the CNDDB, the nearest recently documented GOEA nesting occurrence (2009) is approximately 8.7 miles north of the project site near the Haiwee Powerhouse. Additionally, there are several historically documented GOEA nesting occurrences (1974-77) located south of Little Lake, approximately 3.7 to 6.6 miles south of the project site. There are no GOEA occurrences documented in the project area. Although the area surrounding the project site likely provides suitable foraging habitat for GOEA, there are no tall trees in the project area and very little cliffside habitat that could provide potential GOEA nest sites. Furthermore, no GOEA were observed within the project area during the reconnaissance-level survey. The surrounding hillsides, particularly the upper half of the adjacent Red Hill cinder cone, were surveyed using binoculars and no GOEA or nest sites were detected. Given the level of disturbance from the existing mining operations and the general lack of suitable nest sites within the immediate

project vicinity, the project site and surrounding area is likely not considered suitable to support nesting GOEA.

## Burrowing Owl - SSC

The BUOW is a ground dwelling owl typically found in arid prairies, fields, and open areas where vegetation is sparse and low to the ground. The BUOW is heavily dependent upon the presence of mammal burrows, with ground squirrel burrows being a common choice, in its habitat to provide shelter from predators, inclement weather and to provide a nesting place.

Per the CNDDB, the nearest documented BUOW occurrence (2007) is approximately 4.3 miles north of the project site, less than 1 mile east of Coso Junction. There are no BUOW occurrences documented in the project area. The result of the survey was that no evidence of BUOW was found in the survey area. No BUOW individuals or sign including pellets, feathers or white wash were observed.

Per the definition provided in the 2012 CDFG Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, "Burrowing owl habitat generally includes, but is not limited to, short or sparse vegetation (at least at some time of year), presence of burrows, burrow surrogates or presence of fossorial mammal dens, well-drained soils, and abundant and available prey." Therefore, although the project site does contain friable soils, it would not be considered suitable for BUOW because the site is devoid of vegetation and no appropriately sized burrows or burrow surrogates were detected within the project area.

## Nesting Birds

There is white bursage scrub habitat adjacent the project site that is suitable to support nesting birds. However, the project site is entirely within an area devoid of vegetation and will completely avoid disturbing any adjacent habitat. Therefore, the project is not likely to impact nesting birds.

## Jurisdictional Drainages

No drainages, wetlands or other water features were identified within the project site that would meet the definition of waters of the US. No jurisdictional features subject to the Clean Water Act or Fish & Game Code (FGC) under the jurisdictions of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), or CDFW exist within the project site. The project site is located entirely outside of any jurisdictional areas and no permanent or temporary impacts to jurisdictional features will result from the project. Therefore, no permits or authorizations from the USACE, RWQCB, or CDFW will be required.

# 2.5 RECLAMATION

The intent of SMARA is to "maintain an effective and comprehensive surface mining and reclamation policy with regulation of surface mining operations so as to assure that: (a) adverse environmental effects are prevented or minimized and that mined lands are reclaimed to a usable

condition which is readily adaptable for alternative uses; (b) the production and conservation of minerals are encouraged, while giving consideration to values relating to recreation, watershed, wildlife, range and forage, and aesthetic enjoyment; and (c) residual hazards to the public health and safety are eliminated" (Section 2712).

Article 9, Section 3700 of SMARA states the following: "Reclamation of mined lands shall be implemented in conformance with standards in this Article (Reclamation Standards). The standards shall apply to each surface mining operation to the extent that:

- (1) they are consistent with required mitigation identified in conformance with CEQA; and
- (2) they are consistent with the planned or actual subsequent use or uses of the mining site."

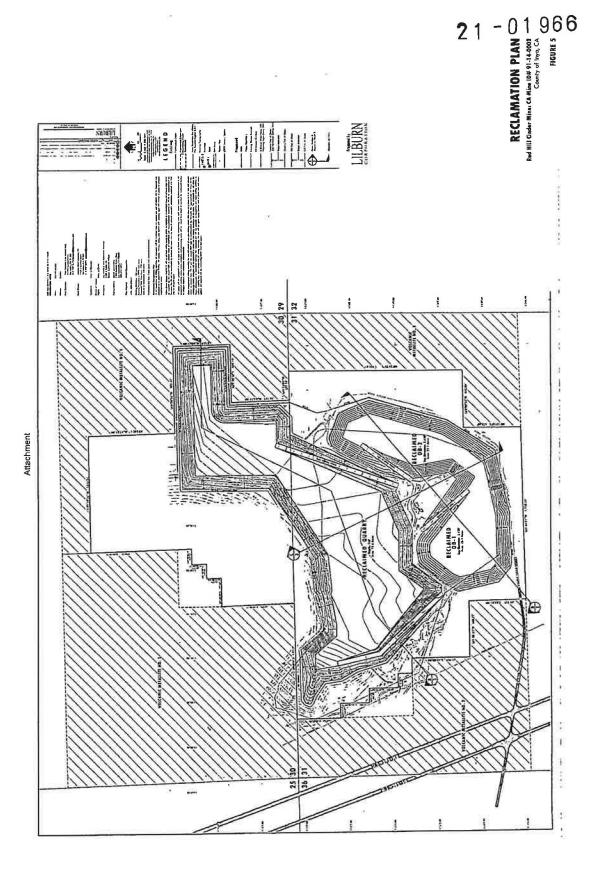
The objectives of this Reclamation Plan are to:

- Eliminate or reduce environmental impacts from mining operations;
- Reclaim in a usable condition for post-mining end uses which will include open space/habitat;
- Reshape mining features and disturbed areas to minimize aesthetic impacts; and
- Reclaim the site as necessary to eliminate hazards to public health and safety.

Please refer to Figure 5 and/or Sheet 2 to review the Reclamation Plan. Reclamation of the mine will be undertaken concurrently with the mining operations. Final reclamation will occur upon termination of excavation activities. Any over-steepened pit slopes will be backfilled or recontoured to 1H:1V per the current CUP. All areas will be contoured in such a way as to blend into the surrounding cone and cinder areas. Active slopes may be as steep as 0.5 horizontal to 1 vertical (0.5H:1V) and cut back within cinder as feasible to a reclaimed slope of no more than 1H:1V as required by the current CUP and Terracon recommendations or pushed down or backfilled with non-commercial material to 2H:1V as recommended by Terracon. Fill material will be non-spec or overburden cinder materials pushed down the steeper slopes to create 2H:1V. The fill will be compacted by tracking the dozer over the slope to achieve necessary compaction consistent with final end use of open space. Surface material in all compacted working areas, roads, stockpiles, and processing areas will be ripped to a depth of 1-foot by mechanical means.

The existing and planned mine areas are devoid of vegetation. There is no top soil or alluvium on-site and no vegetation, therefore no formal revegetation will be undertaken. Any precipitation that falls quickly percolates into the porous sand and gravel cinders. Some vegetation does exist adjacent to the mining areas on the cone itself and on areas with some alluvium soils. Revegetation activities will be undertaken to promote natural wind-blown seeds to possibly grow on the sands as has occurred on some areas of the cinders.

Note that the perimeter road known as Cinder Road on the south and east of the site is within Angelus Block's private land. It is paved on public lands for approximately 0.25 miles east of US 395 then is within Angelus Block's private land until the road passes the mine site's entrance



on the east. This road is open to the public to access public lands managed by the BLM including the Fossil Falls Scenic Area as well as recreational areas to the east.

#### 2.6 REVEGETATION

## **Existing Conditions**

The existing mine areas and those areas to the northeast proposed for future mining consist of mostly non-vegetated cinder gravels and sands. The planned new mining is planned explicitly to avoid vegetated areas due to possible effects to Mojave ground squirrel habitat. Habitat surrounding the project site consists primarily of Ambrosia dumosa Shrubland Alliance (white bursage scrub) which is discussed under Section 2.3 above.

## Revegetation

Each year, beginning in the late fall, any areas greater than approximately 10 acres that will not be impacted by future mining activities will be reclaimed. This timing sequence will continue until final reclamation of all disturbed areas is completed. Upon termination of mining, all remaining disturbed slopes will be reclaimed within one year of discontinuation of excavating operations.

After the disturbed areas have been graded to blend into the surrounding area, the disturbed surface in compacted working areas, stockpile, and processing areas will be loosened by mechanical means to a depth of one-foot. The surface will be graded to leave rills that will enhance the collection of precipitation and natural wind-blown seeds. Any additional revegetation efforts above what may occur naturally could change the overall unique landscape of the barren cinder areas.

With no revegetation proposed, there will be no test plots, irrigation, fertilizer, and revegetation monitoring.

# 2.7 CLEANUP

Within 12 months of the completion of mining activities, all equipment will be removed from the project site. All debris will be removed and disposed at a permitted facility. All quarry fencing, gates, and berms with warning signs will remain in place to prevent unauthorized access.

Upon final reclamation, the two onsite well will be either be capped and locked for possible future use or closed or destroyed in accordance with the California Department of Water Resources Bulletin 74-91 as revised in 1988 or the latest revision and the County regulations and in such a manner that will no longer be a hazard to the health and safety of people and wildlife.

## 2.8 POST RECLAMATION AND FUTURE MINING

Upon completion of mining activities, the site will consist of two pits totaling about 106 acres to a depth of 150 feet with overall slopes no steeper than 1H:1V per the current CUP. The

approximate 49 acres of overburden will be contoured to blend into the exiting landscape of the area. The reclaimed site will allow for future development of additional reserves. The reclaimed site will not preclude or necessitate any future mining activities or surface modification. Upon completion of mining activities, the site will be open space/habitat and its black and red cinder surface will blend in with the surrounding cinder cone and cinder areas.

#### 2.9 SLOPE AND SLOPE TREATMENT

Stabilization of the mine slopes will be accomplished concurrently as mining areas area completed and during the final excavations. Active slopes may be as steep as 0.5 horizontal to I vertical (0.5H:1V) and cut back within cinder as feasible to a reclaimed slope of no more than IH:1V as required by the current CUP and Terracon or pushed down or backfilled with non-commercial material to 2H:1V as recommended by Terracon.

As discussed in Section 1.1 above, Terracon prepared a *Slope Stability Evaluation Report* to assess the cut and fill slopes at the quarry. The results of global slope stability analyses determined that slopes in native cut at 1H:1V up to 160 feet and overburden slopes of 2H:1V up to 60 feet are sufficient to meet factors of safety (FS) in excess of 1.5 static and seismic factors of safety at or greater than 1.1 (refer to Table 3). Backfilled slopes will be configured at 2(H):1(V) to meet recommended factors of safety. Therefore, any final quarry slopes that cannot be flattened to 1H:1V by cutting into native basalt and cinder shall be backfilled at 2H:1(V). Slope stabilization will improve the aesthetics of the site; reduce slope sliding; and eliminate hazards such as un-safe drop-offs.

The fill will be compacted by tracking the dozer over the slope to achieve appropriate compaction consistent with the final end use of open space. No water erosion is expected as the cinders are very porous and rarely forms any runoff channeling or slope erosion.

## 2.10 PONDS, WASTES

There are no ponds on-site either natural or constructed. Chemicals are not used on-site; no chemical processing occurs on-site only crushing and screening. There will be no chemical waste or pollution from the mining operation.

# 2.11 SOILS

Soils within the project area are comprised primarily of cinder sand derived from the adjacent Red Hill cinder volcano. No top soil or organic material occurs on the barren cinder sand and gravels.

## 2.12 DRAINAGE AND EROSION CONTROLS

The project site is composed of volcanic cinder gravels and sands. This material is very porous; there are no drainages or impervious surfaces on-site. Erosion has never been an issue on-site.

If erosion is evident on-site, the operator will implement adequate measures to control surface runoff to protect surrounding lands in a manner commensurate with modern engineering practice. They may include, but not limited to, larger rock, drainage ditches, straw mulch, hay bales, sediment containment basins, and localized control and maintenance measures to intercept and control disturbed area drainage.

If any rills or gullies in excess of 8 square inches in cross sectional area and more than 10 linear feet form on final slopes, they shall be arrested using larger volcanic rock, rock mulch, and any damage to the drainage system will be repaired within one month of observation.

## 2.13 PUBLIC SAFETY

All equipment and debris will be removed from site upon project completion. Public access to the site will be restricted by the site perimeter berm and fence and the locked access gates to the mine site. Any other access roads will be blocked with large boulders or berms. Warning signs with contrasting background lettering will be installed every 500 feet along the approved surface mine boundary stating "No Trespassing - Keep Out; Surface Mining Operation" or similar.

The reclaimed slopes will be of sufficient low gradient as not to cause a hazard to public safety if the public illegally trespasses onto the site past the berms, fences and signs.

#### 2.14 MONITORING AND MAINTENANCE

The County, as the lead agency that implements SMARA, requires annual reporting of Mining and Reclamation activities. The reports are filed with the State Division of Mine Reclamation (DMR) and the County. Monitoring and maintenance of reclamation is an ongoing responsibility of TMRV and Angelus Block, the land owner, who will be responsible to maintain fencing, gates, and signs and remove illegal dumping.

# 2.15 RECLAMATION ASSURANCE

The reclamation assurance shall be reviewed by the Lead Agency annually as required by the SMARA. Inyo County is the lead agency for SMARA compliance and will review the reclamation FACE and inspect the mine site annually.

In addition to the monitoring through inspections and reporting, the operator is required to assure reclamation of the site in accordance with the approved Reclamation Plan in compliance with Section 2773.1 of SMARA. TMRV currently has an irrevocable letter of credit in-place in the amount of approximately \$338,860 and shall continue to post reclamation assurance mechanisms in an amount sufficient to pay for the cost of reclamation as outlined in Section 2. The financial assurances must be approved by and payable to the County and the California Department of Conservation.

## 3.0 GEOLOGY

The Red Hill Cinder Cone is a prominent cinder cone that rises approximately 600 feet to an elevation of 3,952 feet amsl. Red Hill lies in the Coso Volcanic Field and has the distinction of being the youngest volcano in this area, estimated to have been active 10,000 years ago. A cinder cone, also called a scoria cone, is a volcano composed of volcanic cinders (scoria), or small, rough particles of hardened lava. When lava that is highly charged with gas bubbles erupts from a vent under pressure, it tends to shoot straight up into the air. Blobs of the frothy lava break apart, cool quickly, and fall relatively close to the vent. Over time, a cone-shaped hill builds up around a circular crater.

The geology of the local area is defined in the <u>Geologic Map of the Coso Volcanic Field and Adjacent Areas, Invo County, California</u>: U.S. Geological Survey, Duffield, W.A., and Bacon, C.R., 1981, Miscellaneous Investigations Series Map I-1200, scale 1:50,000. A portion of said map was reproduced as Figure 6 – Geologic Map of Red Hill Cinder Cone. The <u>Basalt of Red Hill</u> is defined as "moderately porphyritic basalt containing plagioclase, olivine, and clinopyroxene phenocrysts; xenoliths of granitic rocks common locally. Divided into two parts:

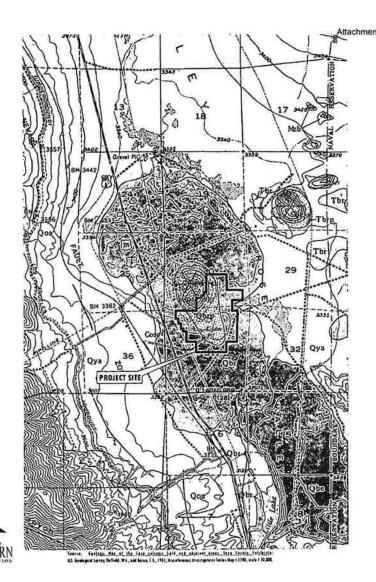
Qbr – Intracanyon flow of Owens River 94 – 10 meters thick Qbrp - Pvroclstic deposits: cinder cone and adjacent cinder mantle"

The area is surrounded by "Qva – Younger alluvium – Alluvial fan deposits, stream deposits of gravel, sand, and silt, windblown sand, and deposits of silt and clay in closed depressions."

The following summary of the Site Geology is from Terracon June 2020 (Appendix B):

The mine utilizes cinder-size material emplaced as cone-erupted deposits from nearby Red Hill that overlay basalt flows of pahoehoe- and aa-type lavas. Cinders vary from black to red color and are sourced from localized eruption centers that changed location during emplacement activity. Native soils of light brown silty sandy alluvium overlie areas around the margin of the cinder deposits. Granitic basement rock underlies the volcanic pile. The cinders are very rough, angular clasts of abrasive siliceous rock material and are strongly interlocked by rough and angular contact. In cut slopes cinders stand at steep angles and exhibit planar joints that penetrate to depths up to 30 feet from native surface. Joints are locally filled with whitish caliche material. Cinders are not welded as in some volcanic piles and can be separated easily with a rock hammer; however, the material exhibits an effective cohesion from the rough and interlocked clast contacts.

Bedding planes exposed in limited cut slopes within the main pit area were measured to dip northward and eastward at angles of 50 to 60 degrees and 20 degrees, respectively. East dipping bedding was measured on a formerly-buried lava flow resting in contact with a cone flank. Bedding can be anticipated to vary throughout the site as construction of a volcanic pile is a somewhat random process that includes liquid material flow and air-fall actions. A northeast striking, steeply dipping joint set dominated the structure of the north highwall area. A 70-degree southward dipping joint system was also noted. The cinder material is anticipated to exhibit relatively homogeneous materials properties at the proposed 1H:1V cut slope angle.



#### LEGEND

BASALT OF RED HILL - Moderately porphyritic basalt containing plagioclase, olivine, and clinopyroxene phenocrysts; xenoliths of granitic rocks common locally. Divided into two parts:

Qbr Intracanyon flow of Owens River (Duffield and Smith, 1978), 4-10 m thick

> Pyroclastic deposits: cinder cone and adjacent cinder mantle BASALT SOUTH OF VOLCANO PEAK - Moderately porphyritic basalt containing plagioclase, olivine, and clinopyroxene phenocrysts. Divided into two parts:

(D) Flow 2-6 m thick Qbay

Pyroclastic deposits: cinder cones and adjacent cinder mantles

BASALT EAST OF LITTLE LAKE — Sparsely porphyritic basalt con-taining plagioclase and olivine phenocrysts. Divided into two parts:

Qbe Intracanyon flow of Owens River (Duffield and Smith, 1978), 5-70 m thick; K-Ar age, 0.140±0.089 m.y. (28)

Qbsp: Pyroclastic deposits: cinder cone

Quip

Qya

YOUNGER ALLUVIUM - Alluvial fan deposits, stream deposits of gravel, sand, and silt, windblown sand, and deposits of silt and clay in closed depressions

GEOLOGIC MAP of RED HILL CINDER CONE
Red Hill Cinder Mine: CA Mine 18# 91-14-9002

County of Inyo, CA

## 4.0 HYDROLOGY

The project site is within an undefined Hydrologic Sub-Area (HSA 624.10) which comprises a 170,880-acre drainage area within the larger Indian Wells-Searles Valleys Watershed (HUC 18090205). This watershed encompasses an approx. 2,019-sq-mile area, partially within southern Inyo County, northeastern Kern County and northwestern San Bernardino County. The Indian Wells-Searles Valley Watershed is bound on the north by the Owens Lake Watershed, on the west by the South Fork Kern Watershed, on the east by the Panamint Valley Watershed and on the south by the Antelope-Fremont Valleys and Coyote-Cuddeback Lakes Watersheds. The Indian Wells-Searles Valleys Watershed is bordered on the west by the southern foothills of the Eastern Sierra Nevada and encompasses portions of the Coso and Argus Range mountains to the north, as well as China Lake and Searles Lake playas. These two dry lakes, which are the major receiving waters of the hydrogeomorphic features within the Indian Wells-Searles Valleys Watershed, were once fed by the Pleistocene Owens River system. The project site is situated in the northern portion of the Indian Wells-Searles Valleys Watershed, adjacent (to the west of) an unnamed intermittent stream and unnamed playa that were once part of the Pleistocene Owens River system.

No drainages or other water features were identified within the project site that would meet the definition of waters of the U.S. per the Clean Water Act. The project site is near an unnamed intermittent stream and unnamed playa to the east side of the project area. The adjacent unnamed intermittent stream and unnamed, intermittently-flooded playa are completely outside (to the east) of the proposed project site. The unnamed intermittent stream originates approximately 12 miles north (upstream) of the project area, at the south end of South Haiwee Reservoir, and terminates approximately 18 miles southeast of the project area.

Areas meeting all three parameters would be designated as USACE wetlands. None of the three required parameters for US Army Corps of Engineers designated wetlands, hydrophitic vegetation, hydric soils and/or wetland hydrology, are present within the project site. Therefore, no wetlands were identified in the study area during this investigation.

The project site is situated near the base of the Red Hill cinder cone and habitat within the project area is comprised of white bursage scrub habitat on the periphery and barren mine areas and cinder sands. There are no drainages or other water features that have a definable bed and bank or associated riparian vegetation that would be subject to the FGC under the jurisdiction of the CDFW, within the project site. The adjacent unnamed intermittent stream and unnamed, intermittently-flooded playa would likely be considered CDFW jurisdictional features, however they are entirely outside of the proposed project site.

Static groundwater was encountered at approximately 187 feet bgs in a drill hole located near the western site boundary in 2015. Information available in California Department of Water Resources Water Data Library indicates a well located about 1 mile east of the site with Local ID 18-28 GTH. Measured water levels between October 2011 and March 2020 in this well were steady near elevation 3,194 feet that correlates to a depth to water of about 172 feet bgs. Based on the 150-foot depth of planned mining, groundwater is not anticipated to occur within the depth of the proposed mining (Terracon June 2020).

# REFERENCES

Annual Mine Inspection Report. Inyo County Planning Dept., June 2017.

Conditional Use Permit (CUP) No. 78-9 for Twin Mountain Rock Company. Inyo County Planning Dept. May 1979.

Environmental Impact Report Red Hill Cinder Mining Project. County of Inyo and VTN Consolidated. 1978.

General Biological Resources Assessment for the Red Hill Cinder Mine Expansion Project. Jericho Systems, Inc., April 2018.

Geologic Map of the Coso volcanic field and adjacent areas, Inyo County, California: U.S. Geological Survey, Duffield, W.A., and Bacon, C.R., 1981, Miscellaneous Investigations Series Map I-1200, scale 1:50,000.

Permits to Operate 559-03-14 7 932-01-15. Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District, June 2020.

Record of Survey. J. E. Miller & Associates, November 2020.

above mean sea level

Slope Stability Evaluation Report - Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002). Terracon Consultants, Inc., June 2020.

# **ACRONYMS**

amsl

| *******      | above mean sea level   |
|--------------|--|
| APN          | assessor's parcel number   |
| bgs          | below ground surface   |
| BLM          | Bureau of Land Management  |
| <b>BMP</b>   | Best Management Practices  |
| <b>BUOW</b>  | burrowing owl  |
| CCR          | California Code of Regulations   |
| <b>CDFW</b>  | California Department of Fish and Wildlife   |
| CEQA         | California Environmental Quality Act   |
| <b>CNDDB</b> | California Natural Diversity Database  |
| CUP          | Conditional Use Permit   |
| CUPA         | County EHS is the Certified Unified Program Agency that oversees hazardous materials |
| cy           | cubic yards  |
| DMR          | Division of Mine Reclamation (State)   |
| DOC          | Department of Conservation (State)   |
| EHS          | Environmental Health Services  |

EIR Environmental Impact Report
FACE Financial Assurance Cost Estimates
FAM Financial Assurance Mechanism

FGC Fish & Game Code

GBUAPCD Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District

GOEA Golden eagle

H: V Slope description (x height to x vertical; typically in feet)

mcy million cubic yards msl mean sea level

OS-40 Open Space with one dwelling unit per 40 acres (County zoning designation)

OSR Open Space and Recreation (County General Plan designation)

RWOCB Regional Water Quality Control Board (Lahontan Region)

SCE Southern California Edison

SMARA Surface Mining and Reclamation Act

SPCC Spill Prevention, Control, and Counter-measure

SSC Species of Special Concern

SWPPP Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program

TMRV Twin Mountain Rock Venture

tpd tons per day tpy tons per year

USACE US Army Corps of Engineers

USFWS United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS United States Geological Survey

## **CROSS REFERENCE MATRIX**

# Red Hill Quarry Mine Reclamation Plan (CUP 79-8), Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA) & California Code of Regulations (CCR Title 14)

# Prepared by Lilburn Corporation - January 2021

Including reference to:

ARTICLE 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS. SECTION 2710 et seq.

ARTICLE 2. DEFINITIONS. SECTION 2725 et seq.

ARTICLE 3. DISTRICT COMMITTEES, SECTION 2740 - 2741

ARTICLE 4. STATE POLICY FOR THE RECLAMATION OF MINED LANDS. SECTION 2755 et seq.

ARTICLE 5. RECLAMATION PLANS AND THE CONDUCT OF SURFACE MINING OPERATIONS.

SECTION 2770 et seq., as amended CCR TITLE 14 (REGISTER 85, No. 18-5-4-83)

CHAPTER 8. MINING AND GEOLOGY

SUBCHAPTER 1. STATE MINING AND GEOLOGY BOARD

ARTICLE 1. SURFACE MINING AND RECLAMATION PRACTIVE, SECTION 3500 et seq.

ARTICLE 9. RECLAMATION STANDARDS. SECTION 3700 et seq.

| SMARA/CCR<br>SECTION  | DESCRIPTION                              | N/A   | PAGE(S)  | SECTION(S) |
|---|--|-------|----------|------------|
|   | MINING OPERATION                         | S AND | CLOSURE  |            |
| SMARA 2770.5  | 100-year flood, Caltrans                 | x     |          |            |
| SMARA 2772<br>(c) (1)   | Name and Address of operator/agent.      |       | 6        | Intro      |
| SMARA 2772<br>(c) (2)   | Quantity & type of minerals to be mined. |       | 13       | 1.1        |
| SMARA 2772<br>(c) (3)   | Initiation and termination date.         |       | 6        | Intro      |
| SMARA 2772<br>(c) (4)   | Maximum anticipated depth of mining.     |       | 10-12    | 1.1        |
| SMARA 2772 Description, including map with boundaries, topographic details, geology, streams, roads, utilities. |  |       | 8-13     | 1.1        |
| SMARA 2772 Schedule for reclamation (c) (6) (concurrent or phased reclamation).                                 |  |       | 8-13; 21 | 1.1; 2.6   |
| SMARA 2772<br>(c) (7)   | Proposed subsequent use.                 |       | 23-24    | 2.8        |
| SMARA 2772 Description of reclamation measures adequate for proposed end use.                                   |  |       | 20-24    | 2.5-2.8    |

| SMARA/CCR<br>SECTION   | DESCRIPTION  | N/A   | PAGE(S)                                       | SECTION(S) |
|--|--|-------|---|------------|
|  | MINING OPERATION   | IS AN | D CLOSURE                                     |            |
| SMARA 2772<br>(c) (8) (a)  | Description of containment control and mine waste disposal.  |       | 13  | 1.2        |
| SMARA 2772<br>(c) (8) (b)  | Rehabilitation of stream<br>banks/beds to minimize<br>erosion  | x     |   |            |
| SMARA 2772<br>(c) (9)  | Impact of reclamation on future mining.  |       | 23-24   | 2.8        |
| SMARA 2772<br>(c) (10)   | Applicant statement accepting responsibility for reclamation per the reclamation plan.   |       | 24  | 2.15       |
| SMARA 2773<br>(a)  | Water quality monitoring plan specific to property.  | X     |   |            |
| SMARA 2773<br>(a)  | Sediment and erosion control monitoring plan specific to property.   |       | 15, 24  | 1.5; 2.12  |
| SMARA 2773<br>(a)  | Revegetation plan specific to property. Monitoring Plan.   |       | 23  | 2.6        |
| SMARA 2773.1 Performance (financial) assurances.                                   |  |       | Currently<br>In-Place; on file<br>with County |            |
| SMARA 2777   | Amended reclamation plans required prior to substantial deviations to approved plans.  | x     | Informational                                 |            |
| CCR 3502 (b)<br>(1)  | Environmental setting and impact of reclamation on surrounding land uses. (Identify sensitive species, wildlife habitat, sensitive natural communities, e.g., wetlands, riparian zones, etc.). |       | 16-20   | 2.1-2.4    |
| CCR 3502 (b)<br>(2)  | Public health and safety (exposure).   |       | 25  | 2,13       |
| CCR 3502 (b)   | Slopes: critical gradient,<br>consider physical properties<br>and landscaping.   |       | 12; 24  | 1.1; 2.9   |
| CCR 3502 (b) (4)  Fill materials in conformance with current engineering practice. |  | x     |   | •••        |
| CCR 3502 (b)   | Disposition of old equipment   |       | 23  | 2.7        |
| CCR 3502 (b)   | Temporary stream and water diversions shown.   | х     | HT.S.   | ===        |

| SMARA/CCR<br>SECTION | DESCRIPTION  | N/A   | PAGE(S) | SECTION(S) |
|----------------------|--|-------|---------|------------|
|                      | MINING OPERATION   | S AND | CLOSURE |            |
| CCR 3503 (a)         | Removal of vegetation and overburden preceding mining kept to a minimum.   |       | 8-13    | LI         |
| CCR 3503 (a)<br>(2)  | Overburden stockpiles managed to minimize water and wind erosion.  |       | 8-13    | 1.1        |
| CCR 3503 (a)<br>(3)  | Erosion control facilities (dikes, ditches, etc.) as necessary.  |       | 15      | 1.5        |
| CCR 3503 (b)         | Settling ponds (sedimentation and water quality).  | х     |         |            |
| CCR 3503 (b)<br>(2)  | Prevent siltation of groundwater recharge areas.   | Х     | ****    |            |
| CCR 3503 (c)         | Protection of fish and wildlife habitat (all reasonable measures).   |       | 16-20   | 2.3-2.4    |
| CCR 3503 (d)         | Disposal of mine waste and overburden (stable-no natural drainage restrictions without suitable provisions for diversion). |       | 8-13    | 1.1        |
| CCR 3503 (e)         | Erosion and drainage (grading to drain to natural courses or interior basins).   |       | 15      | 1.5        |
| CCR 3503 (f)         | Resoiling (fine material on top plus mulches).   | х     |         |            |
| CCR 3503 (g)         | Revegetation and plant<br>survival (use available<br>research).  | x     |         |            |
| CCR 3703 (a)         | Sensitive species conserved or mitigated   |       | 16-20   | 2.3-2.4    |
| CCR 3703 (b)         | Wildlife habitat at least as good as pre-project, if approved end use is habitat.  |       | 20-23   | 2.5-2.6    |
| CCR 3703 (c)         | Wetlands avoided or mitigated at 1:1 minimum   | х     |         |            |
| CCR 3704 (a)         | For urban use, fill compacted in accordance with UBC or local grading ordinance.   | х     |         |            |
| CCR 3704 (b)         | For resource conservation, compare to standard for that end use  |       | 20-23   | 2,5-2.6    |
| CCR 3704 (c)         | Mine waste stockpiled to   |       | 8-13    | 1.1        |

| SMARA/CCR<br>SECTION   | DESCRIPTION   | N/A    | PAGE(S) | SECTION(S) |
|--|---|--------|---------|------------|
|  | MINING OPERATION  | IS AND | CLOSURE |            |
|  | facilitate phased reclamation and separate from growth media.   |        |         |            |
| CCR 3704 (d)  Final reclamation fill slopes not exceed 2:1, except when engineering and revegetation analysis allow. |   |        | 12, 24  | 1.1; 2.9   |
| CCR 3704 (e)   | Final landforms or fills conform with surrounding topography or end use.  |        | 20-23   | 2.5        |
| CCR 3704 (f)   | Cut slopes have minimum factor of safety for end use and conform with surrounding topography.   |        | 12, 24  | 1.1; 2.9   |
| CCR 3704 (g)   | Piles or dumps not placed in wetlands without mitigation.   | х      |         |            |
| CCR 3705 (a)   | Vegetative cover, suitable to<br>end use, self-sustaining.<br>Baseline studies documenting<br>cover, density and species<br>richness. | x      |         |            |
| CCR 3705 (b)   | Test plots if success has not been proven previously  | x      |         |            |
| CCR 3705 (c)   | Decompaction of site.   |        | 21      | 2.5        |
| CCR 3705 (d)   | Roads stripped of road base materials, resoiled and revegetated, unless exempted.   |        | 21      | 2.5        |
| CCR 3705 (e)   | Soil altered or other than<br>native topsoil, required soil<br>analysis. Amend if necessary.  | х      |         |            |
| CCR 3705 (f)   | Temporary access not bladed.<br>Barriers installed.   |        | 25      | 2.13       |
| CCR 3705 (g)  Use native plant species, unless exotic species meet end use.  |   | х      |         |            |
| CCR 3705 (h)   | Plant during correct season. X  |        |         |            |
| CCR 3705 (i)   | Erosian control and irrigation  |        | ***     |            |
| CCR 3705 (j)  If irrigated, demonstrate self- sustaining without for two- year minimum.                              |   | х      | nen.    |            |
| CCR 3705 (k)   | Weeds managed.  | X      |         | 244        |
| CCR 3705 (I)   | Plant protection measures,  | X      |         |            |

| SMARA/CCR<br>SECTION  | DESCRIPTION  | N/A   | PAGE(S)              | SECTION(S) |
|---|--|-------|----------------------|------------|
|   | MINING OPERATION   | S AND | CLOSURE              |            |
|   | fencing, caging.   |       |                      |            |
| CCR 3705 (m)  | Success quantified by cover, density and species-richness. Standards proposed in plan. Sample method set forth in plan and sample size provides 80 percent confidence level, as minimum. | X     |                      |            |
| CCR 3706 (a)  | Mining and reclamation to protect downstream beneficial uses.  | x     | :===                 |            |
| CCR 3706 (b)  | Water quality, recharge, and groundwater storage shall not be diminished, except as allowed by plan.   | x     | inn-                 |            |
| CCR 3706 (c)  | Erosion and sedimentation controlled during all phases as per RWQCB/SWRCB.   |       | 15; 24               | 1.5; 2.4   |
| CCR 3706 (d)  | Surface runoff and drainage controlled and methods designed for not less than 20 year/1 hour intensity storm event.  |       | 15; 24               | 1.5;2.4    |
| CCR 3706 (e)  | Altered drainages shall not cause increased erosion or sedimentation.  | х     |                      | ***        |
| CCR 3706 (f)  Stream diversions constructed in accordance with DFG 1603, EPA 404, Sec. 10 Rivers and Harbors. |  | x     |                      |            |
| CCR 3706 (g)  | All temporary diversions eventually removed.   | x     | 1444                 | -          |
| CCR 3707 (a)  | Return prime ag to prime ag, unless exempted.  | x     | (1 <del>444</del> ). |            |
| CCR 3707 (b)  | Segregate and replace topsoil by horizon.  | x     | (500)                | ***        |
| CCR 3707 (c)  | Productivity rates equal pre-<br>project or similar site for two<br>consecutive years. Rates set<br>forth in plan.   | х     |                      |            |
| CCR 3707 (d)  | Fertilizers and amendments not contaminate water.  | х     |                      |            |
| CCR 3708  | Other ag capable of sustaining   | X     |                      | 200        |

| SMARA/CCR<br>SECTION | DESCRIPTION   | N/A    | PAGE(S)  | SECTION(S) |
|----------------------|---|--------|----------|------------|
|                      | MINING OPERATION  | NS AND | CLOSURE  |            |
|                      | crops of area.  |        |          |            |
| CCR 3709 (a)         | Equipment stored in designated area and waste disposed of according to ordinance.   |        | 8-13; 23 | 1.1; 2.7   |
| CCR 3709 (b)         | Structures and equipment dismantled and removed.  |        | 23       | 2.7        |
| CCR 3710 (a)         | Surface and groundwater protected.  |        | 15; 24   | 1.5; 2.12  |
| CCR 3710 (a)         | Surface and groundwater projected in accordance with  |        | 15; 24   | 1.5; 2.12  |
| CCR 3710 (b)         | In-stream in accordance with CFG 1600, EPA 404, and Sec. 10 Rivers and Harbors.   | x      | =        |            |
| CCR 3710 (c)         | In-stream channel elevations<br>and bank erosion evaluated<br>annually using extraction<br>quantities, cross-sections, and<br>aerial photos.      | х      |          |            |
| CCR 3710 (d)         | In-stream mining activities shall not cause fish to become entrapped in pools or in off-channel pits. California Fish and Game Code section 1600. | x      |          |            |
| CCR 3711(a)          | All salvageable topsoil removed. Topsoil and vegetation removal not proceed mining by more than one year.   | x      |          |            |
| CCR 3711 (b)         | Topsoil resources mapped prior to stripping, location of stockpiles on map. Topsoil and growth media in separate stockpiles.                      | х      | ****     |            |

| SMARA/CCR<br>SECTION  | DESCRIPTION  | N/A    | PAGE(S) | SECTION(S) |
|---|--|--------|---------|------------|
|   | MINING OPERATION   | NS AND | CLOSURE |            |
| CCR 3711 (c) Soil salvage and phases set forth in plan, minimize disturbance, designed to achieve revegetation success. |  | x      |         |            |
| CCR 3711 (d)  | Topsoiling phased ASAP. Stockpiles not to be disturbed   |        |         |            |
| CCR 3711 (e) Topsoil redistributed in stable site and consistent thickness.   |  | х      |         |            |
| CCR 3712 Waste and tailings, and waste disposal governed by SWRCB (Article 7, Chapter 15, Title 23, CCR).               |  |        | 13      | 1.2        |
| CCR 3713 (a) Drill holes, water wells, monitoring wells abandoned in accordance with laws.                              |  |        | 23      | 2.7        |
| CCR 3713 (b)  | All portals, shafts, tunnels, or openings, gated or protected from public entry, but preserve access for wildlife. | x      |         |            |

# APPENDIX A BIOLOGICAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT JERICHO SYSTEMS INC. APRIL 2018

# General Biological Resources Assessment For the Red Hill Cinder Mine Expansion Project

Unincorporated Area of Southwestern Inyo County, California USGS – *Little Lake* Quadrangle, Sections 30 & 31 of Township 22 South, Range 38 East

Prepared for:

Lilburn Corporation Attn: Martin Derus 1905 Business Center Drive San Bernardino, CA 92408

Prepared April 2018

Prepared by:



Jericho Systems, Inc. 47 1st Street, Suite 1 Redlands, CA 92373-4601

# Certification

Jericho Systems, Inc. 47 1<sup>st</sup> Street, Suite 1 Redlands, CA 92373-4601 (909) 915-5900



Contact: Shay Lawrey, President and Ecologist/Regulatory Specialist

Certification: I hereby certify that the statements furnished herein, and in the attached exhibits present data and information required for this Biological Resources Repot to the best of my ability, and the facts, statements, and information presented are true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief. This report was prepared in accordance with professional requirements and standards. Fieldwork conducted for this assessment was performed by me. I certify that I have not signed a non-disclosure or consultant confidentiality agreement with the project proponent and that I have no financial interest in the project.

Shay Lawrey, Ecologist/Regulatory Specialist

# **Table of Contents**

| CERT              | TIFICATION  |    |
|-------------------|---|----|
| 1 B               | INTRODUCTION  |    |
| 1.1<br>1.2<br>1.3 | PROJECT LOCATION  | 1  |
| 2 A               | ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY  | 2  |
| 2.1<br>2.2        | BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES ASSESSMENT   |    |
| 3 R               | RESULTS   | 4  |
|                   | EXISTING BIOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL CONDITIONS   | 4  |
| -                 | SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES AND HABITATS  3.2.1 Special Status Species  3.2.2 Jurisdictional Delineation | 6  |
| 4 C               | CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS   | 11 |
| 4.1<br>4.2        | SENSITIVE BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES  | 11 |
| 5 L               | LITERATURE CITED  | 14 |

Table 2. CNDDB Species and Habitats Documented Within the Little Lake, Coso Junction, Cactus Peak and Volcano Peak USGS 7.5-minute Quadrangles

Figures 1-4

Site Photographs

Appendix A - Regulatory Framework

# 1 Introduction

On behalf of Lilburn Corporation, Jericho Systems, Inc. (Jericho) conducted a general biological resources assessment (BRA) and burrowing owl (Athene cunicularia) and Mohave ground squirrel (Xerospermophilus mohavensis) habitat suitability assessments for the Red Hill Cinder Mine Expansion Project (project). The purpose of the BRA was to address potential effects of the project to designated critical habitats and/or any species currently listed or formally proposed for listing as endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) or species designated as sensitive by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW [formerly California Department of Fish and Game]) and/or the California Native Plant Society (CNPS).

The project site was assessed for sensitive species known to occur locally. Attention was focused on those State- and/or federally-listed as threatened or endangered species and California Fully Protected species that have been documented in the project vicinity, whose habitat requirements are present within the vicinity of the project site. Results of the survey and habitat assessment are intended to provide sufficient baseline information to the project proponent and, if required, to federal and State regulatory agencies, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and CDFW, respectively, to determine if impacts will occur and to identify mitigation measures to offset those impacts.

In addition to the BRA and habitat assessments, Jericho biologists Daniel Smith, Eugene Jennings and Todd White conducted a Jurisdictional Delineation (JD) of the project site. The purpose of the JD is to determine the extent of State and federal jurisdictional waters within the project area potentially subject to regulation by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA), Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) under Section 401 of the CWA and Porter Cologne Water Quality Control Act, and CDFW under Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code (FGC), respectively.

# 1.1 Project Description

The project will consist of expanding the existing Red Hill Quarry onto an approximately 60-acre site that is adjacent the northeast of the existing einder mine. The expansion area is entirely within privately-owned land (Assessor Parcel Number [APN]: 03709011), surrounded by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) public lands and the Fossil Falls Scenic Area to the south. The expansion project is covered under the existing 1979 Red Hill Quarry mining permit, which is good through 2019. The project is adjacent the southcast side of Red Hill, which is a cinder cone volcano comprised of pumice and lava rock. The project will completely avoid impacts to the cinder cone itself.

## 1.2 Project Location

The project site is located approximately 0.75 miles cast of U.S. Route 395 (US 395), adjacent the southeast side of Red Hill, approximately 5 miles south of Coso Junction and 2.4 miles north of Little Lake, near the unincorporated area of Coso, in southwestern Inyo County, California (Figure 1). The project site is situated in the northeast corner of the *Little Lake* USGS 7.5-minute series quadrangle, in Sections 30 and 31 of Township 22 South, Range 38 East, Mount Diablo Base Meridian. The project area is accessed from US 395 by Cinder Road (Figures 1&2).

# 1.3 Environmental Setting

The project site is situated near Coso, in the southern end of the Rose Valley, between the Sierra Nevada Mountains to the west and the Coso Range to the east, in the western Mojave Desert. The Coso area is subject to both seasonal and annual variations in temperature and precipitation. Average annual maximum

temperatures peak at 95.6 degrees Fahrenheit (° F) in July and fall to an average annual minimum temperature of 29.1° F in January. Average annual precipitation is greatest from November through March and reaches a peak in February (1.3 inches). Precipitation is lowest in the month of June (0.09 inches). Annual precipitation averages 6.5 inches. The topography of the project area is relatively flat on the eastern portion and sloped on the western portion, along the base of Red Hill. Elevation on site ranges from approximately 3,340 feet above mean sea level (amsl) in the eastern portion of the site, to 3,430 feet amsl in the westernmost portion of the site, nearest the base of the Red Hill cinder cone.

Hydrologically, the project area is located within an undefined Hydrologic Sub-Area (HSA 624.10) which comprises a 170,880-acre drainage area within the larger Indian Wells-Searles Valleys Watershed (HUC 18090205).

Soils within the project area are comprised primarily of cinder sand derived from the adjacent Red Hill cinder volcano.

The general project vicinity consists existing mining operations (Red Hill Quarry) and undeveloped open space. Habitat surrounding the project site consists primarily of *Ambrosia dumosa* Shrubland Alliance (white bursage scrub). The project site itself is devoid of vegetation, consisting entirely of cinder sand and gravel. Much of the project site is relatively undisturbed, however the south/southwestern most portion of the site is disturbed due to the existing mining operations.

# 2 Assessment Methodology

# 2.1 Biological Resources Assessment

Data regarding biological resources on the project site were obtained through literature review and field investigations. Prior to performing the surveys, available databases and documentation relevant to the project site were reviewed for documented occurrences of sensitive species in the area. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) threatened and endangered species occurrence data overlay and the most recent versions of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB) and California Native Plant Society Electronic Inventory (CNPSEI) databases, as well as the BLM California Special Status Plants list, were searched for sensitive species data on the Little Lake, Coso Junction, Cactus Peak and Volcano Peak USGS 7.5-minute series quadrangles. The project site is situated in the northeastern portion of the Little Lake quad. The site's proximity to the Coso Junction, Cactus Peak and Volcano Peak quads lead to their inclusion in the review. These databases contain records of reported occurrences of State- and federally-listed species or otherwise sensitive species and habitats that may occur within the vicinity of the project site. Other available technical information on the biological resources of the area was also reviewed including previous surveys and recent findings.

Jericho biologists Daniel Smith, Eugene Jennings and Todd White conducted a biological resources assessment of the project area on January 29, 2018. The survey area encompassed the entire project site and included 100 percent coverage of the site with transects spaced approximately 10 meters apart, as well as an approximately 500-foot buffer area surrounding the site. Wildlife species were detected during field surveys by sight, calls, tracks, scat, or other sign. In addition to species observed, expected wildlife usage of the site was determined per known habitat preferences of regional wildlife species and knowledge of their relative distributions in the area. The focus of the faunal species surveys was to identify potential habitat for special status wildlife within the project area.

## 2.2 Jurisdictional Delineation

On January 30, 2018, Jericho biologists Daniel Smith, Eugene Jennings and Todd White also evaluated the

project site and adjacent areas for the presence of riverine/riparian/wetland habitat and jurisdictional waters, i.e. waters of the U.S. as regulated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer (USACE) and Regional Water Quality Control (RWQCB), and/or jurisdictional streambed and associated riparian habitat as regulated by the California Department Fish and Wildlife (CDFW).

Prior to the field visit, aerial photographs of the site were viewed and compared with the surrounding USGS 7.5-minute topographic quadrangle maps to identify drainage features within the survey area as indicated from topographic changes, blue-line features, or visible drainage patterns. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetland Inventory and Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Program "My Waters" data layer were also reviewed to determine whether any hydrologic features and wetland areas had been documented within the vicinity of the site. Similarly, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soil maps for southwestern Inyo County were used to identify the soil series in the area and to check these soils to determine whether they are regionally identified as hydric soils. Upstream and downstream connectivity of waterways (if present) was reviewed in the field and on aerial photographs and topographic maps to determine jurisdictional status.

During the field surveys, the survey team carefully assessed the site for depressions, inundation, presence of hydrophytic vegetation, staining, cracked soil, ponding, and indicators of active surface flow and corresponding physical characteristics such as a clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris. Suspected jurisdictional areas were checked for the presence of definable channels, soils, and hydrology.

Evaluation of potential federal jurisdiction followed the regulations set forth in 33CFR part 328 and the USACE guidance documents and evaluation of potential State jurisdiction followed guidance in the Fish and Game Code and A Review of Stream Processes and Forms in Dryland Watersheds (CDFW, 2010)...

To be considered a jurisdictional wetland under the federal Clean Water Act, Section 404, an area must possess three (3) wetland characteristics: hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology.

Hydrophytic vegetation: Hydrophytic vegetation is plant life that grows, and is typically adapted for life, in permanently or periodically saturated soils. The hydrophytic vegetation criterion is met if more than 50 percent of the dominant plant species from all strata (tree, shrub, and herb layers) is considered hydrophytic. Hydrophytic species are those included on the 2013 National Wetland Plant List (Arid West Region) (Lichvar, 2013). Each species on the list is rated per a wetland indicator category, as shown in Table 1. To be considered hydrophytic, the species must have wetland indicator status, i.e., be rated as OBL, FACW or FAC.

Table 1: Wetland Indicator Vegetation Categories

| Guttany                    | Probability  |
|----------------------------|--|
| Obligate Wetland (OBL)     | Almost always occur in wetlands (estimated probability >99%)                           |
| Facultative Wetland (FACW) | Usually occur in wetlands (estimated probability 67 to 99%)                            |
| Facultative (FAC)          | Equally likely to occur in wetlands and non-wetlands (estimated probability 34 to 66%) |
| Facultative Upland (FACU)  | Usually occur in non-wetlands (estimated probability 67 to 99%)                        |

| Obligate Upland (UPL)  | Almost always occur in non-wetlands (estimated probability >99%) |
|--|--|
| The second secon |  |

Mydric Soil: Soil maps from the USDA-NRCS Web Soil Survey (USDA 2016) were reviewed for soil types found within the project area. Hydric soils are saturated or inundated long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions that favor growth and regeneration of hydrophytic vegetation. There are several indirect indicators that may signify the presence of hydric soils including hydrogen sulfide generation, the presence of iron and manganese concretions, certain soil colors, gleying, and the presence of mottling. Generally, hydric soils are dark in color or may be gleyed (bluish, greenish, or grayish), resulting from soil development under anoxic (without oxygen) conditions. Bright mottles within an otherwise dark soil matrix indicate periodic saturation with intervening periods of soil aeration. Hydric indicators are particularly difficult to observe in sandy soils, which are often recently deposited soils of flood plains (entisols) and usually lack sufficient fines (clay and silt) and organic material to allow use of soil color as a reliable indicator of hydric conditions. Hydric soil indicators in sandy soils include accumulations of organic matter in the surface horizon, vertical streaking of subsurface horizons by organic matter, and organic pans.

The hydric soil criterion is satisfied at a location if soils in the area can be inferred or observed to have a high groundwater table, if there is evidence of prolonged soil saturation, or if there are any indicators suggesting a long-term reducing environment in the upper part of the soil profile. Reducing conditions are most easily assessed using soil color. Soil colors were evaluated using the Munsell Soil Color Charts (Gretag/Macbeth, 2000). Soil pits were dug to an approximate depth of 18 inches to evaluate soil profiles for indications of anaerobic and redoximorphic (hydric) conditions in the subsurface.

<u>Wetland Hydrology</u>: The wetland hydrology criterion is satisfied at a location based upon conclusions inferred from field observations that indicate an area has a high probability of being inundated or saturated (flooded, ponded, or tidally influenced) long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the surface soil environment, especially the root zone (USACE, 1987 and 2008b).

# 3 Results

# 3.1 Existing Biological and Physical Conditions

The project site consists almost entirely of undeveloped open space, occupying mostly flat to gently-sloped terrain that surrounds the Red Hill cinder cone. The topography of the site is mostly uniform throughout, comprised of volcanic cinders or cinder sand and the site is completely devoid of vegetation. Most of the site is relatively undisturbed, with some evidence of off-road vehicle use. Disturbances on site are primarily due to the existing mining operations, which border the southernmost end of the project site, and include unpaved roads, temporary structures and material stockpiles.

## 3.1.1 Habitat

The project site itself is devoid of vegetation, consisting entirely of cinder sand and gravel (see attached photos). The habitat surrounding the project site consists primarily of Ambrosia dumosa Shrubland Alliance (white bursage scrub). The white bursage scrub habitat adjacent the north/northwestern portion of the site is co-dominated by white bursage (Ambrosia dumosa) and allscale saltbush (Atriplex polycarpa). However, this habitat is more species diverse adjacent the southern/southwestern portion of the site, where it is co-dominated by white bursage, burrobush (Ambrosia salsola), allscale saltbush and shadscale (Atriplex

confertifolia). Other native plant species identified within the survey area include, Devil's lettuce (Amsinckia tessellata), Fremont's milk vetch (Astragalus lentiginosus var. fremontii), Mojave eriastrum (Eriastrum densifolium ssp. mohavense), desert trumpet (Eriogonum inflatum), angle stemmed buckwheat (E. maculatum), yellow turbins (E. pusillum), kidney leaf buckwheat (E. reniforme), desert bush nettle (Eucnide urens), creosote (Larrea tridentata), desert star (Monoptilon bellidiforme), annual psathyrotes (Psathyrotes annua), sage thistle (Salvia carduacea), desert mallow (Sphaeralcea ambigua) and Mojave woodyaster (Xylorhiza tortifolia).

## 3.1.2 Wildlife

## 3.1.2.1 Amphibians and Reptiles

No amphibian species were observed or otherwise detected within the project area and none are expected to occur. The only reptile species observed within the project area was western side-blotched lizard (*Uta stansburiana elegans*). However, the survey was conducted during the winter brumation period for many herp species and temperatures were relatively cool (62°-71° F) during the survey. Other common species expected to occur within the project area include Great Basin whiptail (*Aspidoscellis tigris tigris*), zebratailed lizard (*Callisaurus draconoides*), desert banded gecko (*Coleonyx variegatus variegatus*), Panamint rattlesnake (*Crotalus stephensi*), desert iguana (*Dipsosaurus dorsalis*), California kingsnake (*Lampropeltis californiae*) and Great Basin gopher snake (*Pituophis catenifer deserticola*).

#### 3.1.2.2 Birds

Avian species observed in the project area include northern harrier (Circus cyaneus), common raven (Corvus corax) and rock wren (Salpinetes obsoletus).

#### 3.1.2.3 Mammals

Identification of mammals within the project area was generally determined by physical evidence rather than direct visual identification. This is because 1) many of the mammal species that potentially occur onsite are nocturnal and would not have been active during the survey and 2) no mammal trapping was performed. The only mammal species observed was black-tailed jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*). Other common species expected to occur within the project area include coyote (*Canis latrans*), Merriams' kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami*), and desert cottontail (*Sylvilagus audubonii*).

### 3.2 Special Status Species and Habitats

Per the CNDDB, CNPSEI, and other relevant literature and databases, 21 sensitive species (9 plant species, 12 animal species) have been documented in the Little Lake, Coso Junction, Cactus Peak and Volcano Peak USGS 7.5-minute series quadrangles. This list of sensitive species and habitats includes any State- and/or federally-listed threatened or endangered species, California Fully Protected species, CDFW designated Species of Special Concern (SSC), and otherwise Special Animals. "Special Animals" is a general term that refers to all the taxa the CNDDB is interested in tracking, regardless of their legal or protection status. This list is also referred to as the list of "species at risk" or "special status species." The CDFW considers the taxa on this list to be those of greatest conservation need.

There are three State- and/or federally-listed species documented within the *Little Lake, Coso Junction, Cactus Peak* and *Volcano Peak* quads. Of the three State- and/or federally-listed species, only the following two have been documented in the project vicinity (within approximately 7 miles):

- Desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii)
- Mohave ground squirtel (Xerospermophilus mohavensis)

Although not State- or federally-listed as threatened or endangered species, the golden eagle (Aquila chrysaetos [GOEA]) is a CDFW Fully Protected species and BUOW are considered a State and federal SSC and both species are protected by the international treaty under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and by State law under the California FGC (FGC #3513 & #3503.5). There is potentially suitable habitat for these species within the project vicinity and both species have been documented in the project vicinity. Therefore, GOEA and BUOW will be included in the discussion below.

Additionally, the following two BLM Sensitive Plant Species have been documented in the project vicinity and the environmental conditions within the habitat surrounding the project site are suitable to support these species:

- Creamy blazing star (Mentzelia tridentata)
- Charlotte's phacelia (Phacelia nashiana)

An analysis of the likelihood for occurrence of all CNDDB sensitive species documented in the Little Lake, Coso Junction, Cactus Peak and Volcano Peak quads is provided in Table 2. This analysis considers species' range as well as documentation within the vicinity of the project area and includes the habitat requirements for each species and the potential for their occurrence on the site, based on required habitat elements and range relative to the current site conditions.

## 3.2.1 Special Status Species

No State- and/or federally-listed threatened or endangered species, or other sensitive species were observed on site during the reconnaissance-level field survey. However, there is some habitat adjacent the proposed project footprint that may be suitable for several sensitive species identified in the literature review (Table 2) and several sensitive species have been documented near the project site. In addition to the general biological resources assessment, habitat suitability assessments were conducted within the project area for BUOW and Mohave ground squirrel.

## Desert Tortoise - Threatened (State/Federal)

The desert tortoise is a State- and federally-listed threatened species. Throughout its range, it is threatened by habitat loss, domestic grazing, predation, collections, and increased mortality rates. The desert tortoise is typically found in creosote bush scrub. They are most often found on level or sloped ground where the substrate is firm but not too rocky. Tortoise burrows are typically found at the base of shrubs, in the sides of washes and in hillsides. Because a single tortoise may have many burrows distributed throughout its home range, it is not possible to predict exact numbers of individuals on a site based upon burrow numbers.

In 1992 the BLM issued the California Statewide Desert Tortoise Management Policy which included categorizing habitat into three levels of classification. The management goal for Category I areas is to maintain stable, viable populations and to increase the population where possible. The management goal for Category II areas is to maintain stable, viable populations. The management goal for Category III areas is to limit population declines to the extent feasible. In April 1993, the BLM amended the CDCA plan to delineate these three categories of desert tortoise habitat on public lands. With the adoption of the West Mojave Plan (BLM 2005), all lands that are outside Desert Wildlife Management Areas are characterized as Category 3 Habitat, which is the lowest priority management area for viable populations of the desert tortoise.

<u>Findings</u>: Per the CNDDB, the nearest documented desert tortoise occurrence (2006) is approximately 6.4 miles northwest of the project site. There are no desert tortoise occurrences documented in the project area and there is no suitable habitat for this species within the project

site. However, some of the surrounding area adjacent portions of the project site does contain white bursage scrub habitat suitable to support desert tortoise.

Per the USFWS descrit tortoise Critical Habitat overlay, the project site is not within any USFWS designated descrit tortoise Critical Habitat. Furthermore, the project site is not within a BLM designated Desert Wildlife Management Area (USFWS 2011). Therefore, the habitat surrounding the site would be characterized as Category 3 Habitat, per the BLM categorization of desert tortoise habitat on public lands.

The assessment survey was structured, in part, to detect desert tortoise. The survey consisted of walking transects spaced approximately 10 meters apart to provide 100% visual coverage of the project site, as well as an approximately 500-foot buffer area surrounding the site. The result of the survey was that no evidence of desert tortoise was found in the survey area. No desert tortoise individuals or sign including burrows or scat were observed. Therefore, desert tortoise are considered absent from the project site.

## Mohave Ground Squirrel - Threatened (State)

The Mohave ground squirrel is a State-listed threatened species. This small, grayish, diurnal ground squirrel is endemic to two million hectares in the western Mojave Desert. It typically inhabits sandy soils of alkali sink and crossote bush scrub habitat. Mohave ground squirrel forage on leaves and seeds and aestivate/hibernate for long periods of the year. Plants documented as forage for this species include: fiddleneck (Amsinckia tessellata), allscale (Atriplex canescens and A. polycarpa), desert holly (A. hymenelytra), coreopsis (Coreopsis sp.), spiny hopsage (Grayia spinosa), winterfat (Krascheninnikovia lanata), wolfberry (Lycium andersonii), Joshua tree (Yucca brevifolia) and the seeds of Joshua tree. It is suspected that Mohave ground squirrel forage on the plant species with the highest water content available at the time.

<u>Findings</u>: Although a focused Mohave ground squirrel trapping survey was not performed, Jericho conducted a Mohave ground squirrel habitat suitability assessment of the proposed project site and adjacent habitat. The habitat assessment included a pedestrian field assessment, review of reported occurrences of the Mohave ground squirrel in the region (CNDDB 2018), and adherence to CDFW's criteria for assessing potential impacts to the Mohave ground squirrel. The criteria questions are as follows:

- 1. Is the site within the range of the Mohave ground squirrel?;
- 2. Is there native habitat with a relatively diverse shrub component?; and
- 3. Is the site surrounded by development and therefore isolated from potentially occupied habitat?

The project site falls within the current range of the MGS but is located outside, to the east, of the Mohave ground squirrel Conservation Area set forth in the West Mojave Plan (BLM 2005). Per the CNDDB, there are 21 recent and historic Mohave ground squirrel occurrences documented in the Little Lake, Coso Junction, Cactus Peak and Volcano Peak quads. The nearest historically documented occurrence (1988) for Mohave ground squirrel is approximately 2 miles north of the project site. The nearest recently documented Mohave ground squirrel occurrence (2010) is approximately 8 miles northeast of the project site.

The entire project site (approximately 60 acres) consists of unvegetated cinder sand, which would not be considered suitable to support this species due to a lack of forage plants. However, some of the surrounding area adjacent portions of the project site does consist of white bursage scrub habitat

that would be considered suitable to support Mohave ground squirrel. This habitat is mostly restricted to the areas adjacent the western portion of the site, around the base of the cinder cone, and adjacent the northernmost portion of the site, respectively. Furthermore, although the southern portion of the site is bordered by existing mining operations, there is undeveloped contiguous suitable habitat between the project site and documented Mohave ground squirrel occurrences to the north and east. Therefore, Mohave ground squirrel could potentially occur within areas of suitable habitat surrounding the project site.

## Golden Eagle - CDFW Fully Protected

The GOEA is a CDFW Fully Protected species. GOEA are found throughout North America, but are more common in western North America (CDFW 2017). Habitat typically consists of rolling foothills and mountain terrain, wide arid plateaus deeply cut by streams and canyons, open mountain slopes, and cliffs and rock outcrops (Polite and Pratt 1990). GOEA build large platform nests, typically on cliffs and in large trees in open areas of rugged, open habitats with canyons and escarpments (Polite and Pratt 1990). Threats include loss of foraging areas, loss of nesting habitat, pesticide poisoning, lead poisoning and collision with man-made structures such as wind turbines (CDFW 2017).

Raptors and all migratory bird species, whether listed or not, receive protection under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918. The MBTA prohibits individuals to kill, take, possess or sell any migratory bird, or bird parts (including nests and eggs) except in accordance with regulations prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior Department (16 U. S. Code 7035). Additional protection is provided to all bald and golden eagles under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act of 1940, as amended. State protection is extended to all birds of prey by the California FGC, Section 2503.57. No take is allowed under these provisions except through the approval of the agencies or their designated representatives.

Findings: Per the CNDDB, the nearest recently documented GOEA nesting occurrence (2009) is approximately 8.7 miles north of the project site, near the Haiwee Powerhouse, south of the South Haiwee Dam. Additionally, there are several historically documented GOEA nesting occurrences (1974-77) located south of Little Lake, approximately 3.7 to 6.6 miles south of the project site. There are no GOEA occurrences documented in the project area. Although the area surrounding the project site likely provides suitable foraging habitat for GOEA, there are no tall trees in the project area and very little cliffside habitat that could provide potential GOEA nest sites. Furthermore, no GOEA were observed within the project area during the reconnaissance-level survey. The surrounding hillsides, particularly the upper half of the adjacent Red Hill cinder cone, were surveyed using binoculars and no GOEA or nest sites were detected. Given the level of disturbance from the existing mining operations and the general lack of suitable nest sites within the immediate project vicinity, the project site and surrounding area is likely not considered suitable to support nesting GOEA.

# Burrowing Owl - SSC

The BUOW is a ground dwelling owl typically found in arid prairies, fields, and open areas where vegetation is sparse and low to the ground. The BUOW is heavily dependent upon the presence of mammal burrows, with ground squirrel burrows being a common choice, in its habitat to provide shelter from predators, inclement weather and to provide a nesting place (Coulombe 1971). They are also known to make use of human-created structures, such as cement culverts and pipes, for burrows. BUOW spend a great deal of time standing on dirt mounds at the entrance to a burrow or perched on a fence post or other low to the ground perch from which they hunt for prey. They feed primarily on insects such as grasshoppers, June beetles and moths, but will also take small rodents, birds, and reptiles. They are active

during the day and night, but are considered a crepuscular owl; generally observed in the early morning hours or at twilight. The breeding season for BUOW is February 1 through August 31.

BUOW have disappeared from significant portions of their range in the last 15 years and, overall, nearly 60% of the breeding groups of owls known to have existed in California during the 1980s had disappeared by the early 1990s (Burrowing Owl Consortium 1993). The BUOW is not listed under the State or federal ESA, but is considered both a State and federal SSC. The BUOW is a migratory bird protected by the international treaty under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and by State law under the California FGC (FGC #3513 & #3503.5).

<u>Findings</u>: Per the CNDDB, the nearest documented BUOW occurrence (2007) is approximately 4.3 miles north of the project site, less than 1 mile east of Coso Junction. There are no BUOW occurrences documented in the project area.

The assessment survey was structured, in part, to detect BUOW. The survey consisted of walking transects spaced to provide 100% visual coverage of the project site, including an approximately 500-foot buffer area around the project site. The result of the survey was that no evidence of BUOW was found in the survey area. No BUOW individuals or sign including pellets, feathers or white wash were observed.

Per the definition provided in the 2012 CDFG Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation, "Burrowing owl habitat generally includes, but is not limited to, short or sparse vegetation (at least at some time of year), presence of burrows, burrow surrogates or presence of fossorial mammal dens, well-drained soils, and abundant and available prey." Therefore, although the project site does contain friable soils, it would not be considered suitable for BUOW because the site is devoid of vegetation and no appropriately sized burrows or burrow surrogates were detected within the project area.

## **BLM Sensitive Plant Species**

The project site is surrounded by BLM managed lands. The BLM manages species that is considers sensitive, regardless of their State or federal listing status. The following two BLM Sensitive Plan Species have been documented in the project vicinity: creamy blazing star (*Mentzelia tridentata*) and Charlotte's phacelia (*Phacelia nashiana*).

Findings: Per the CNDDB, the nearest documented creamy blazing star occurrence is on the west slopes of Red Hill, approximately 0.3 miles west of the project site, and the nearest documented Charlotte's phacelia occurrence is approximately 3 miles southwest of the project site. Neither species was detected during survey. However, it should be noted that given that the survey was conducted in January, many of the annual species were not in bloom at the time of survey. The bloom period for creamy blazing star is typically March through May and the bloom period for Charlotte's phacelia is March through June, respectively (Calflora 2018). Although neither species was detected during survey, the soils and habitat types adjacent the western and northernmost portions of the project site are suitable for these species to occur in.

## 3.2.2 Jurisdictional Delineation

The project site is within an undefined Hydrologic Sub-Area (HSA 624.10) which comprises a 170,880-acre drainage area within the larger Indian Wells-Searles Valleys Watershed (HUC 18090205). This watershed encompasses an approximately 2.019-square-mile area, partially within southern Inyo County, northeastern Kern County and northwestern San Bernardino County, respectively. The Indian Wells-

Searles Valleys Watershed is bound on the north by the Owens Lake Watershed, on the west by the South Fork Kern Watershed, on the east by the Panamint Valley Watershed and on the south by the Antelope-Fremont Valleys and Coyote-Cuddeback Lakes Watersheds. The Indian Wells-Searles Valleys Watershed is bordered on the west by the southernmost foothills of the Eastern Sierra Nevada and encompasses portions of the Coso Range and Argus Range mountains to the north, as well as China Lake and Searles Lake playas. These two dry lakes, which are the major receiving waters of the hydrogeomorphic features within the Indian Wells-Searles Valleys Watershed, were once fed by the Pleistocene Owens River system. The project site is situated in the northern portion of the Indian Wells-Searles Valleys Watershed, adjacent (to the west of) an unnamed intermittent stream and unnamed playa that were once part of the Pleistocene Owens River system.

# Waters of the U.S.

The USACE has authority to permit the discharge of dredged or fill material in waters of the U.S. under Section 404 CWA. WoUS are defined as: "All waters used in interstate or foreign commerce; all interstate waters including interstate wetlands; all other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent and ephemeral streams), mudflats, sand flats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes or natural ponds, where the use, degradation, or destruction of which could affect interstate commerce; impoundments of these waters; tributaries of these waters; or wetlands adjacent to these waters" (Section 404 of the CWA; 33 CFR 328.3 (a). CWA jurisdiction exists over the following:

- 1. all traditional navigable waters (TNWs);
- 2. all wetlands adjacent to TNWs;
- non-navigable tributaries of TNWs that are relatively permanent waters (RPWs) i.e., tributaries that
  typically flow year-round or have continuous flow at least seasonally; and
- 4. every water body determined to have a significant nexus with TNWs.

No drainages or other water features were identified within the project site that would meet the definition of WoUS. The project site is near an unnamed intermittent stream and unnamed playa, which are both adjacent the east side of the project area. These two intermittently-flooded features are both part of what was once the Pleistocene Owens River system and the unnamed playa was inundated at the time the survey was conducted (see attached photos). The unnamed intermittent stream originates approximately 12 miles north (upstream) of the project area, at the south end of South Haiwee Reservoir, and terminates approximately 18 miles southeast of the project area, in an area approximately 9 miles northwest of China Lake.

The adjacent unnamed intermittent stream and unnamed, intermittently-flooded playa are completely outside (to the east) of the proposed project site. Furthermore, these features would be considered isolated waters as they do not have a significant nexus to a TNW and would be not be considered jurisdictional WoUS. Therefore, no water features were identified within the project site that would meet the definition of WoUS.

# **USACE** Wetlands

Areas meeting all three parameters would be designated as USACE wetlands. None of the three required parameters, hydrophitic vegetation, hydric soils and/or wetland hydrology, are present within the project site. Therefore, no wetlands were identified in the study area during this investigation based of the absence of hydrophitic vegetation, hydric soil indicators and/or wetland hydrology.

#### State Luke/Streambed

The project site is situated near the base of the Red Hill cinder cone and habitat within the project area is comprised of white bursage scrub habitat. There are no drainages or other water features that have a definable bed and bank or associated riparian vegetation that would be subject to the FGC under the jurisdiction of the CDFW, within the project site. The adjacent unnamed intermittent stream and unnamed, intermittently-flooded playa would likely be considered CDFW jurisdictional features, however they are entirely outside of the proposed project site.

# 4 Conclusions and Recommendations

# 4.1 Sensitive Biological Resources

No State- and/or federally-listed threatened or endangered species were observed on site during the field survey and due to the lack of suitable habitat on site, none are expected to occur within the proposed project footprint. The entire project site is unvegetated, consisting of cinder sand and gravel. There is white bursage scrub habitat adjacent the western portion of the site, around the base of the cinder cone, as well as adjacent the northernmost portion of the site, that could potentially be suitable to support several sensitive species. However, the project will not impact any sensitive species or habitats that may potentially support sensitive species, including the State- and federally-listed as threatened desert tortoise or the State-listed as threatened Mohave ground squirrel.

The proposed project footprint originally included approximately 29 acres of white bursage scrub habitat within the project boundary, primarily along the northern and western portions of the current proposed project footprint. However, to avoid all potential impacts to sensitive species that could potentially occur within this habitat, the project proponent modified the project boundary to avoid disturbing any of the adjacent white bursage scrub habitat. The current proposed project footprint is completely within an unvegetated area that consists entirely of cinder sand and gravel. Therefore, the project will not impact any of the adjacent white bursage scrub habitat or sensitive species identified as potentially occurring within this habitat.

According to protocol and standard practices, the results of the habitat assessment surveys will remain valid for the period of one year, or until January 29, 2019, after which time, if the site has not been disturbed in the interim, another survey may be required to determine the persisting absence of desert tortoise, BUOW and other sensitive flora and fauna on-site. Regardless of survey results and conclusions given herein, desert tortoise, BUOW and Mohave ground squirrel are protected by applicable State and/or federal laws, including but not exclusive to the CESA and Federal ESA. As such, if a desert tortoise, BUOW or Mohave ground squirrel are found on-site during work activities, all activities likely to affect the animal(s) should cease immediately and regulatory agencies should be contacted to determine appropriate management actions. Importantly, nothing given in this report, including any recommended avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures, is intended to authorize the incidental take of desert tortoise or Mohave ground squirrel or any other listed species during project activities. Such authorization must come from the appropriate regulatory agencies, including CDFW (i.e., authorization under section 2081 of the FGC) and USFWS. Additionally, it should be noted that desert tortoise may be handled only by a qualified biologist who has been given authorization by the appropriate agencies (i.e. USFWS and CDFW).

## Desert Tortoise

No evidence of desert tortoise was found in the project area during survey and the nearest documented desert tortoise occurrence is approximately 6.4 miles northwest of the project site. No desert tortoise individuals or sign including burrows or seat were observed on site. Furthermore, the project site does not

contain any habitat that would be considered suitable to support this species. Therefore, desert tortoise are considered absent from the project site and immediate surrounding area. No further focused surveys for this species are warranted or recommended. However, because there is potentially suitable white bursage scrub habitat for desert tortoise within some of the adjacent areas surrounding portions of the project site, it is recommended that a 100-foot buffer area be established between the proposed project footprint and any adjacent suitable habitat, to avoid any potential project-related impacts to this species. The adjacent habitat, including the 100-foot buffer area, should be clearly marked prior to any ground disturbing activities and avoided.

## Mohave Ground Squirrel

Although there is no suitable Mohave ground squirrel habitat within the project site, there is potentially suitable habitat for Mohave ground squirrel adjacent some portions of the project site and the nearest documented Mohave ground squirrel is approximately 2 miles north of the project site. No focused protocol-level Mohave ground squirrel trapping surveys were conducted, so it is currently not known if Mohave ground squirrel occur within the suitable white bursage scrub habitat surrounding the project site. Therefore, as for desert tortoise (above), it is recommended that a 100-foot buffer area be established between the proposed project footprint and any adjacent suitable habitat, to avoid any potential project-related impacts to Mohave ground squirrel or any other sensitive species that may occur within the adjacent white bursage scrub habitat. As stated above, the adjacent habitat, including the 100-foot buffer area, should be clearly marked prior to any ground disturbing activities and avoided.

#### **Burrowing Owl**

A BUOW habitat suitability assessment was conducted, which included 100% visual coverage of the project site and approximately 500-foot buffer area around the project site. The result of the BUOW habitat assessment is that the project site and surrounding area are not considered suitable to support BUOW, due to the absence of vegetation on site, as well as the absence of appropriately sized burrows or burrow surrogates within the survey area. No BUOW individuals or sign including pellets, feathers or white wash were observed within the project site or surrounding area and this species is currently considered absent from the project area. Due to the absence of suitable habitat and BUOW sign, the project is not likely to impact his species and protocol-level BUOW surveys are not warranted or recommended at this time.

## Sensitive Plant Species

There are no State- or federally-listed plant species documented in the project vicinity. However, several sensitive plant species, including two BLM Sensitive Plants (creamy blazing star and Charlotte's phacelia) have been documented in the project vicinity. As previously discussed, the project site is completely unvegetated, consisting entirely of cinder sand and gravel, and all adjacent white bursage scrub habitat will be completely avoided. Therefore, the project will not impact any sensitive plant species that may occur within adjacent habitat communities.

### **Nesting Birds**

There is white bursage scrub habitat adjacent the project site that is suitable to support nesting birds. However, the project site is entirely within an area devoid of vegetation and will completely avoid disturbing any adjacent habitat. Therefore, the project is not likely to impact nesting birds.

## 4.2 Jurisdictional Waters

No jurisdictional features subject to the CWA or FGC under the jurisdictions of the USACE, RWQCB, or

CDFW exist within the project site. The project site is located entirely outside of any jurisdictional areas and no permanent or temporary impacts to jurisdictional features will result from the project. Therefore, no permits or authorizations from the USACE, RWQCB, or CDFW will be required.

# 5 Literature Cited

- American Ornithologists' Union. 1989. Thirty-seventh supplement to the American Ornithologists' Union Check-list of North American birds. Auk 106: 532-538.
- Califora: Information on California plants for education, research and conservation. [web application]. 2017.

  Berkeley, California: The Califora Database [a non-profit organization]. Available: <a href="http://www.californ.org/">http://www.californ.org/</a>. (Accessed: January 26, 2018)
- California Burrowing Owl Consortium. 1993. Burrowing Owl Survey Protocol and Mitigation Guidelines.
- California Department of Fish and Game. 1995. Staff report on burrowing owl mitigation. Memo from C.F. Raysbrook, Interim Director to Biologist, Environmental Services Division, Department of Fish and Game. Sacramento, CA.
- California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). 2012. Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. State of California Natural Resources Agency. March 7, 2012.
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). 2017. Golden Eagles in California. Retrieved from: https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Birds/Golden-Fagles.
- California Native Plant Society (CNPS). 2018. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California. Rare Plant Scientific Advisory Committee, David P. Tibor, Convening Editor. California Native Plant Society. Sacramento, California. Available at: <a href="http://www.enps.org/inventory">http://www.enps.org/inventory</a> (Accessed: January 26, 2018)
- California Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB), 2018. Annotated record search for special animals, plants and natural communities. Natural Heritage Division, Sacramento, California. (January 26, 2018)
- Environmental Laboratory, 1987. "Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual," Technical Report Y-87-1, U.S. Army Engineer Waterways Experiment Station, Vicksburg, Miss.
- Hall, E.R. 1981. The Mammals of North America. John Wiley and Sons, New York. 2 Vol. 1181
- Hickman, J. C., ed. 1993, The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California. Univ. of Calif. Pr., Berkeley, CA.
- Leitner. P. 2008. Current status of the Mohave ground squirrel. Transactions of the Western Section of the Wildlife Society 44: 11-29.
- Leitner, P. 2015. Current status of the Mohave ground squirrel (Xerospermophilus mohavensis): A five-year update (2008–2012). Endangered Species Recovery Program, California State University, Stanislaus, One University Circle, Turlock, California 95382. Published in Western Wildlife 2: 9–22.
- Lichvar, R.W., D.L. Banks, W.N. Kirchner, and N.C. Melvin. 2016. The National Wetland Plant List: 2016 wetland ratings. Phytoneuron 2016-30: 1-17. Published 28 April 2016. ISSN 2153 733X
- Munz, P.A. 1974. A Flora of Southern California, University of California Press, Berkeley, California,
- Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). 2018. Web Soil Survey. Map Unit Descriptions. San Bernardino County Area, California. Available at: <a href="http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm">http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm</a>. (Accessed: January 26, 2018).
- Polite, C and J. Pratt. 1990. Life History Account for Golden Eagle. California Department of Fish and Game, California Interagency Wildlife Task Group. Available at: <a href="https://www.wikdlife.ea.gov/Data/CWHR/Life-History-and-Range">https://www.wikdlife.ea.gov/Data/CWHR/Life-History-and-Range</a> (Accessed: January 26, 2018)

- Sawyer, John O., Keeler-Wolf, Todd, and Evens, Julie M. 2009. A manual of California vegetation. Second Edition. California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, California, USA. 1,300 pages.
- Skinner, M.W. and B. M. Pavlik, eds. 1994. Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California. 5th edition. California Native Plant Society, Sacramento, California.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 2001. USACE Minimum Standards for Acceptance of Preliminary Wetlands Delineations, November 30, 2001 (Minimum Standards).
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 2007. Jurisdictional Determination Form Instructional Guidebook (JD Form Guidebook). May 30.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 2008. Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region (Version 2.0), ed. J. S. Wakeley, R. W. Liehvar, and C. V. Noble. ERDC/EL TR-08-28. Vicksburg, MS: U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 2014. A Field Guide to the Identification of the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) in the Arid West Region of the Western United States (A Delineation Manual). August 2008.
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). 1980. The California Desert Conservation Area Plan. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Riverside, California. 173 pp.
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). 1988. A Sikes Act Management Plan for the Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area and Area of Critical Environmental Concern. U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Ridgeerest, California. 43 pp. + unpaginated appendices.
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). 1989. Map produced by BLM for the California Desert Conservation Area, dated January 1989, showing desert tortoise Category I, 2, and 3 Habitats in California. Riverside, CA.
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM). 2005. Final Environmental Impact Report and Statement for the West Mojave Plan, a Habitat Conservation Plan and California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment. Moreno Valley, CA.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). National Wetlands Inventory. Website: <a href="http://wetlands.fws.gov">http://wetlands.fws.gov</a>. (Accessed: January 26, 2018)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 1994. The desert tortoise (Mojave population) recovery plan. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1, Lead Region, Portland, Oregon. 73 pp. + appendices.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 2008. Field survey protocol for any nonfederal action that may occur within the range of the desert tortoise. Ventura, CA.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2011. Revised recovery plan for the Mojave population of the desert tortoise (Gopherus agassizii). U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pacific Southwest Region, Sacramento, California. 222 pp.
- Western Regional Climate Center. Period of Record Monthly Climate Summary for Haiwee, California (043710). Available at: <a href="https://wrec.dri.edu/egi-bin/eliMAIN.pl?ca3710">https://wrec.dri.edu/egi-bin/eliMAIN.pl?ca3710</a>. (Accessed: January 26, 2018).

ADDITIONAL TABLES

Table 2. CNDDB Species and Habitats Documented Within the Little Lake, Coso Junction, Cactus Peak and Volcano Peak USGS 7.5-minute Quadrangles

| Scientific Name         | Common Name            | Listing Status<br>Federal/ State | Other Lists               | Habitat  | Occurrence Potential  |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--|---|
| Aliciella ripleyi       | Ripley's aliciella     | None/ None                       | G3; S2;<br>CNPS: 2B.3     | Mojavean desert scrub. On limestone; rocky slopes, rock/cliff bases, and rock crevices. 300-1950 m.  | The soil types this species is associated with (limestone) is not present within the project area. Occurrence potential is low.   |
| Antrozous pallidus      | pallid bat             | None/ None                       | G5; S3;<br>CDFW: SSC      | Deserts, grasslands, shrublands, woodlands and forests. Most common in open, dry habitats with rocky areas for roosting. Roosts must protect bats from high temperatures. Very sensitive to disturbance of roosting sites. | Although there is little to no roosting habitat within the project site, there are some rocky outcrops adjacent the site that could potentially provide roosting habitat for this species. However, the nearest documented occurrence is approx. 8.8 miles NE of the project site and there is a significant level of human disturbance in the area, due to the existing quarry. Occurrence potential is low. |
| Aquila chrysaetos       | golden eagle           | None/ None                       | G5; S3;<br>CDFW: FP       | Rolling foothills, mountain areas, sage-juniper flats, and desert. Cliff-walled canyons provide nesting habitat in most parts of range; also, large trees in open areas.   | Given the level of disturbance from the existing mining operations and the general lack of suitable nest sites within the immediate project vicinity, the project site and surrounding area is likely not considered suitable to support nesting GOEA. Occurrence potential is low.   |
| Astragalus atratus var. | Darwin Mesa milk-vetch |                                  | G4G5T2; S2;<br>CNPS: 1B.1 | Great Basin scrub, Joshua tree woodland, pinyon and juniper woodland. Dry desert slopes and mesas, often sheltering under and entangled in shrubs, in volcanic clay and gravel. 1705-2320 m.                               | The project area is outside the elevation range for this species. Occurrence potential is low.  |

| Scientific Name                     | Common Name         | Listing Status<br>Federal/ State | Other Lists                   | Habitat   | Occurrence Potential  |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Athene cunicularia                  | burrowing owl       | None/ None                       | G4; S3;<br>CDFW: SSC          | Open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts, and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation. Subterranean nester, dependent upon burrowing mammals, most notably, the California ground squirrel. | No appropriately sized burrows or burrow surrogates were detected within the project area, which is devoid of vegetation. Occurrence potential is low.  |
| Bombus crotchii                     | Crotch bumble bee   | None/ None                       | G3G4; S1S2                    | Coastal California east to the Sierra-Cascade crest and south into Mexico. Food plant genera include Antirrhinum, Phacelia, Clarkia, Dendromecon, Eschscholzia, and Eriogonum.                                  | Although there are some food plants for this species within the project area, the nearest documented occurrence is approx.  13.7 miles N of the project site.  Occurrence potential is low.   |
| Canbya candida                      | white pygmy-poppy   | None/ None                       | G3G4; S3S4;<br>CNPS: 4.2      | Joshua tree woodland,<br>Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon<br>and juniper woodland. Gravelly,<br>sandy, granitic places. 600-1460<br>m.   | There is some habitat this species is associated with present adjacent the project site and the nearest documented occurrence for this species is approx. 0.8 miles S of the project site. However, the project site is entirely devoid of vegetation and the project will not disturb any adjacent habitat. Occurrence potential is low. |
| Clarkia xantiana ssp.<br>parviflora | Kern Canyon clarkia | None/ None                       | G4T3T4;<br>S3S4;<br>CNPS: 4.2 | Chaparral, cismontane woodland, Great Basin scrub, valley and foothill grassland. Often seen on sandy, sometimes rocky, slopes. Sometimes on roadsides. 700-1750 m.   | There is some habitat this species is associated with present adjacent the project site, but the nearest documented occurrence for this species is approx. 7.4 miles NW of the project site. Occurrence potential is low.   |

| Scientific Name                    | Common Name          | Listing Status<br>Federal/ State | Other Lists             | Habitat  | Occurrence Potential  |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|--|---|
| Corynorhinus townsendii            | Townsend's big-eared | None/ None                       | G3G4; S2;<br>CDFW: SSC  | Throughout California in a wide variety of habitats. Most common in mesic sites. Roosts in the open, hanging from walls and ceilings. Roosting sites limiting. Extremely sensitive to human disturbance.                               | No suitable roosting habitat for this species exists in the project area and there is a significant level of human disturbance in the area, due to the existing quarry. Occurrence potential is low.  |
| Eremothera boothii ssp.<br>boothii | Booth's evening-     | None/ None                       | G5T4; S2;<br>CNPS: 2B.3 | Joshua tree woodland, pinyon and juniper woodland. 290-2410 m.   | The habitats this species is associated with are not present within the project area. Occurrence potential is <b>low</b> .  |
| Gopherus agassizii                 | desert tortoise      | Threatened/<br>Threatened        | G3; S2S3                | Most common in desert scrub, desert wash, and Joshua tree habitats; occurs in almost every desert habitat. Require friable soil for burrow and nest construction. Creosote bush habitat with large annual wildflower blooms preferred. | No desert tortoise individuals or sign including burrows or scat were observed during survey and there is no suitable habitat for this species within the proposed project footprint. Furthermore, the nearest documented occurrence is approx. 6.4 miles NW of the project site. Occurrence potential is low.  |
| Lasionycteris noctivagans          | silver-haired bat    | None/ None                       | G5; S3S4                | Primarily a coastal and montane forest dweller, feeding over streams, ponds and open brushy areas. Roosts in hollow trees, beneath exfoliating bark, abandoned woodpecker holes, and rarely under rocks. Needs drinking water.         | Although there are some rocky outcrops adjacent the site that could potentially provide roosting habitat for this species, there are no suitable roosting trees within the project area. Additionally, the nearest documented occurrence is approx. 6 miles N of the project site. Occurrence potential is low. |

|   |   | Listing Status |                         |   |   |
|---|---|----------------|-------------------------|---|---|
| Scientific Name                                   | Common Name                             | Federal/ State | Other Lists             | Habitat   | Occurrence Potential  |
|   |   |                |                         |   | There is some habitat this species i<br>associated with present adjacent<br>the project site and the nearest  |
|   |   |                |                         |   | documented occurrence for this species is approx. 0.3 miles W of the project site, on the W side of   |
|   |   |                |                         |   | Red Hill. However, the project site is entirely devoid of vegetation and  |
| Mentzelia tridentata                              | creamy blazing star                     | None/ None     | G3; S3;<br>CNPS: 1B.3   | Mojavean desert scrub. 545-<br>1100 m.  | the project will not disturb any adjacent habitat. Occurrence potential is low.   |
|   |   |                |                         | Found in wetlands and lush<br>grassy ground in the Owens<br>Valley. Needs friable soil for  |   |
| Microtus californicus                             | O Valle Is                              | No. of No.     | G5T3; S3;               | burrowing. Eats grasses, sedges<br>and herbs. Clips grass to make   | No suitable habitat for this species exists in the project area.  |
| vallicola  Penstemon fruticiformis var. amargosae | Owens Valley vole  Amargosa beardtongue | None/ None     | G4T3; S2;<br>CNPS: 1B.3 | Mojavean desert scrub. Sandy or gravelly washes and drainages. 940-1890 m.  | Occurrence potential is low.  There is some habitat this species is associated with present adjacent the project site, but the nearest documented occurrence for this species is approx. 9.2 miles NE of the project site. Occurrence potential is low.   |
| var. umuryosue                                    | Amargosa beardionigue                   | Notice Notice  | G3; S3;                 | Joshua tree woodland, Mojavean desert scrub, pinyon and juniper woodland. Granitic soils; sandy or rocky areas on steep slopes or flats. 335-2180 | There is some habitat this species i associated with present adjacent the project site and the nearest documented occurrence for this species is approx. 3 miles SW of the project site. However, the project site is entirely devoid of vegetation and the project will not disturb any adjacent habitat. Occurrence |
| Phacelia nashiana                                 | Charlotte's phacelia                    | None/ None     | CNPS: 1B.2              | m.  | potential is low.   |

| C-1AICAICAI                | Common N            | Listing Status | 0.1         | 11-14                             | 0                                     |
|----------------------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Scientific Name            | Common Name         | Federal/ State | Other Lists | Habitat                           | Occurrence Potential                  |
|                            |                     |                |             | Owens Valley. Along east side     |                                       |
|                            |                     |                |             | from Pine Creek to Little Lake,   |                                       |
| Y                          |                     |                |             | and along west side from French   |                                       |
|                            |                     |                |             | Spring to Marble Creek. Seeps     | E 20 A 0 E 2 E 2                      |
|                            |                     |                |             | and small-moderate size spring-   | The habitats this species is          |
|                            |                     |                |             | fed streams. Common in            | associated with are not present       |
|                            |                     |                | 0           | watercress and/or on small bits   | within the project area. Occurrence   |
| Pyrgulopsis wongi          | Wong's springsnail  | None/ None     | G2; S2      | of travertine and stone.          | potential is low.                     |
|                            |                     |                |             | Small streams and springs in      |                                       |
|                            |                     |                | G5T1T2Q;    | Owens Valley. Occupies a          | No suitable habitat for this species  |
|                            |                     |                | S1S2;       | variety of habitats. Rarely found | exists in the project area.           |
| Rhinichthys osculus ssp. 2 | Owens speckled dace | None/ None     | CDFW: SSC   | in water > 29° C.                 | Occurrence potential is low.          |
|                            |                     |                |             | Meadows and seeps, chenopod       |                                       |
|                            |                     |                |             | scrub. Moist alkaline meadows     |                                       |
|                            |                     |                |             | and freshwater seeps, fine        | The habitats this species is          |
|                            |                     |                |             | sandy loam soil, one occurrence   | associated with are not present       |
|                            | Owens Valley        | None/          | G2; S2;     | in stony calcareous soil. 1090-   | within the project area. Occurrence   |
| Sidalcea covillei          | checkerbloom        | Endangered     | CNPS: 1B.1  | 1420 m.                           | potential is low.                     |
|                            |                     |                |             | Desert resident; primarily of     |                                       |
|                            |                     | 1              | 1           | open desert wash, desert scrub,   |                                       |
|                            |                     |                |             | alkali desert scrub, and desert   | There is some potentially suitable    |
|                            |                     |                |             | succulent scrub habitats.         | habitat for this species adjacent the |
|                            |                     |                |             | Commonly nests in a dense,        | northern and western portions of      |
|                            |                     | 1              |             | spiny shrub or densely branched   | the project site. Occurrence          |
|                            |                     |                | G4; S3;     | cactus in desert wash habitat,    | potential is moderate in the area     |
| Toxostoma lecontei         | Le Conte's thrasher | None/ None     | CDFW: SSC   | usually 2-8 feet above ground.    | surrounding the project site.         |

| Scientific Name  | Common Name            | Listing Status<br>Federal/ State | Other Lists | Habitat                          | Occurrence Potential   |
|------------------|------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|----------------------------------|--|
|                  |                        |                                  |             |                                  | There is some potentially suitable habitat for this species adjacent the |
|                  |                        |                                  |             |                                  | northern and western portions of   |
|                  |                        |                                  |             | t                                | the project site and the nearest   |
|                  |                        |                                  |             | Open desert scrub, alkali scrub  | documented occurrence for this   |
|                  |                        |                                  | 1           | and Joshua tree woodland. Also   | species is approx. 2 miles N of the                                      |
|                  |                        |                                  |             | feeds in annual grasslands.      | site. However, there is no suitable                                      |
|                  |                        |                                  | 1           | Restricted to Mojave Desert.     | habitat for this species within the                                      |
|                  | 1                      |                                  | 1           | Prefers sandy to gravelly soils, | proposed project footprint and the                                       |
|                  |                        |                                  | p.          | avoids rocky areas. Uses         | project will completely avoid  |
| Xerospermophilus |                        | None/                            |             | burrows at base of shrubs for    | disturbing any adjacent habitat.   |
| mohavensis       | Mohave ground squirrel | Threatened                       | G2G3; S2S3  | cover. Nests are in burrows.     | Occurrence potential is low.   |

#### Coding and Terms

E = Endangered T = Threatened C = Candidate FP = Fully Protected SSC = Species of Special Concern

State Species of Special Concern: An administrative designation given to vertebrate species that appear to be vulnerable to extinction because of declining populations, limited acreages, and/or continuing threats. Raptor and owls are protected under section 3502.5 of the California Fish and Game code: "It is unlawful to take, possess or destroy any birds in the orders Falconiformes or Strigiformes or to take, possess or destroy the nest or eggs of any such bird."

State Fully Protected: The classification of Fully Protected was the State's initial effort in the 1960's to identify and provide additional protection to those animals that were rare or faced possible extinction. Lists were created for fish, mammals, amphibians and reptiles. Fully Protected species may not be taken or possessed at any time and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except for collecting these species for necessary scientific research and relocation of the bird species for the protection of livestock.

#### Global Rankings (Species or Natural Community Level):

- G1 = Critically Imperiled At very high risk of extinction due to extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer populations), very steep declines, or other factors,
- G2 = Imperiled At high risk of extinction due to very restricted range, very few populations (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors.
- G3 = Vulnerable At moderate risk of extinction due to a restricted range, relatively few populations (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors.
- G4 = Apparently Secure Uncommon but not rare; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.
- G5 = Secure Common; widespread and abundant.

Subspecies Level: Taxa which are subspecies or varieties receive a taxon rank (T-rank) attached to their G-rank. Where the G-rank reflects the condition of the entire species, the T-rank reflects the global situation of just the subspecies. For example: the Point Reves mountain beaver. Apladontia rufa ssp. phaea is ranked G5T2. The G-rank refers to the whole species range i.e., Aplodontia rufa. The T-rank refers only to the global condition of ssp. placa.

#### State Ranking:

- S1 = Critically Imperiled Critically imperiled in the State because of extreme rarity (often 5 or fewer populations) or because of factor(s) such as very steep declines making it especially vulnerable to extirpation from the State.
- S2 = Imperiled Imperiled in the State because of farity due to very restricted range, very few populations (often 20 or fewer), steep declines, or other factors making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the State.
- S3 = Vulnerable Vulnerable in the State due to a restricted range, relatively few populations (often 80 or fewer), recent and widespread declines, or other factors making it vulnerable to extirpation from the State.
- S4 = Apparently Secure Uncommon but not rare in the State; some cause for long-term concern due to declines or other factors.
- S5 = Secure Common, widespread, and abundant in the State.

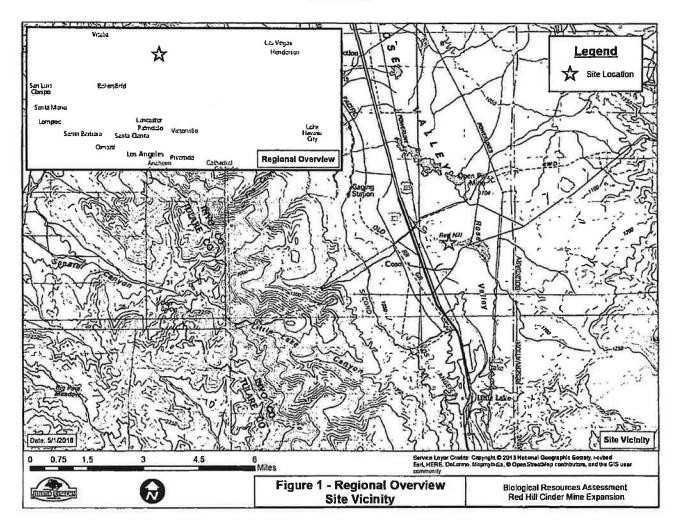
#### California Rare Plant Rankings (CNPS List):

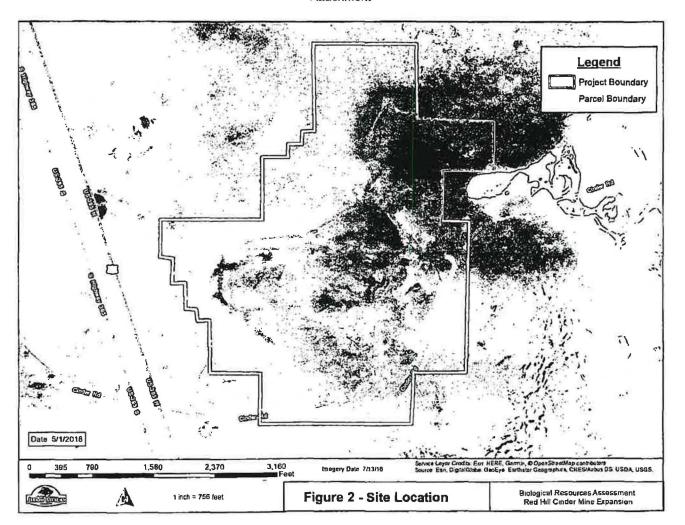
- 1A = Plants presumed extirpated in California and either rare or extinct elsewhere.
- 1B = Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere,
- 2A = Plants presumed extirpated in California, but common elsewhere.
- 2B = Plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California, but more common elsewhere.
- 3 = Plants about which more information is needed; a review list.
- 4 = Plants of limited distribution; a watch list.

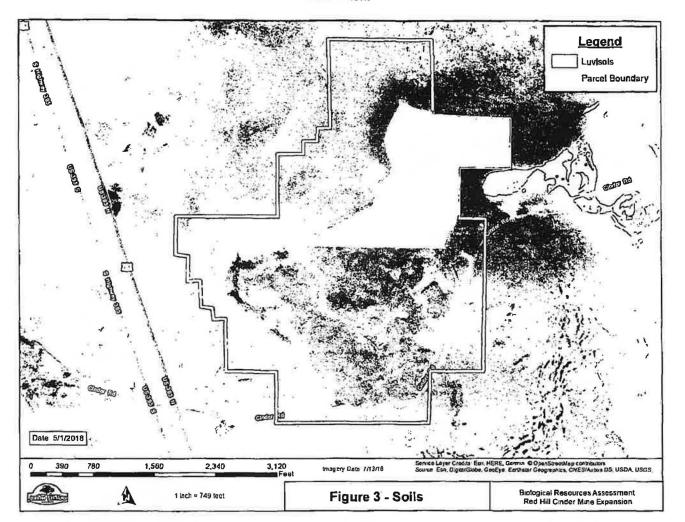
#### Threat Ranks:

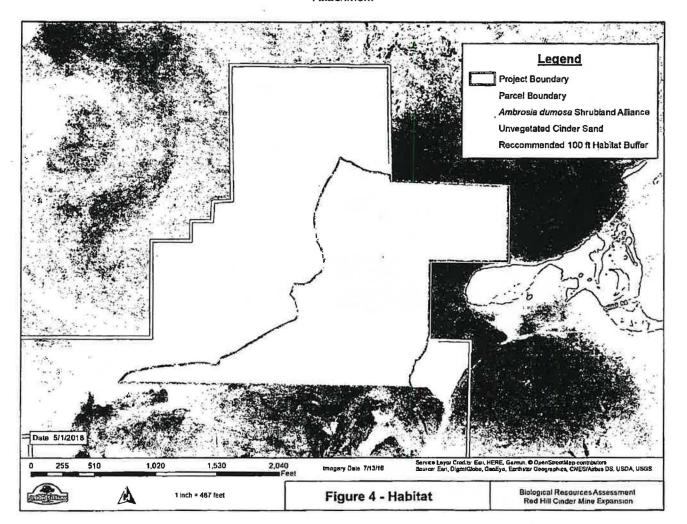
- .1 = Seriously threatened in California (over 80% of occurrences threatened / high degree and immediacy of threat)
- .2 = Moderately threatened in California (20-80% occurrences threatened / moderate degree and immediacy of threat)
- .3 = Not very threatened in California (less than 20% of occurrences threatened / low degree and immediacy of threat or no current threats known)

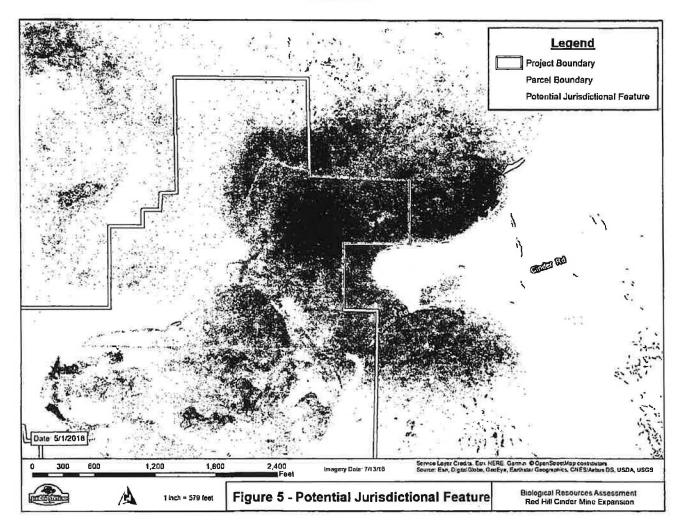
**FIGURES** 



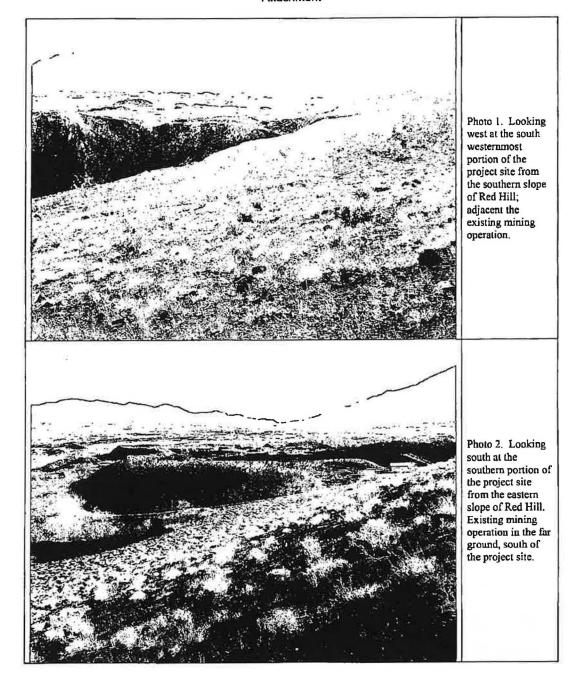


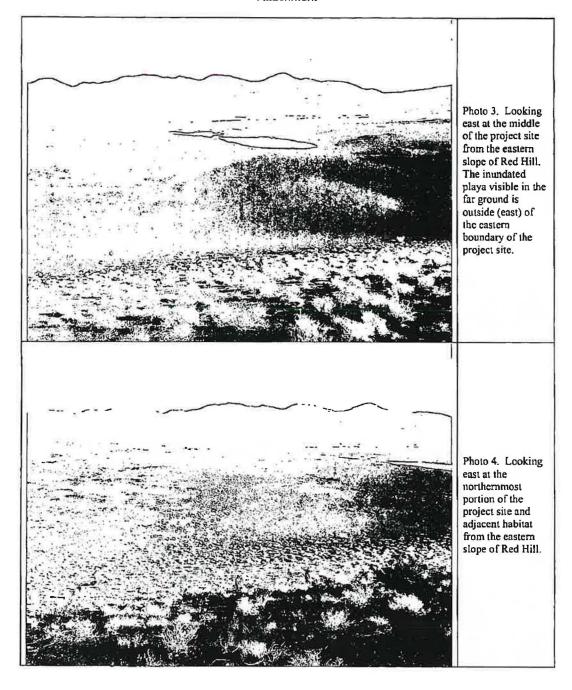


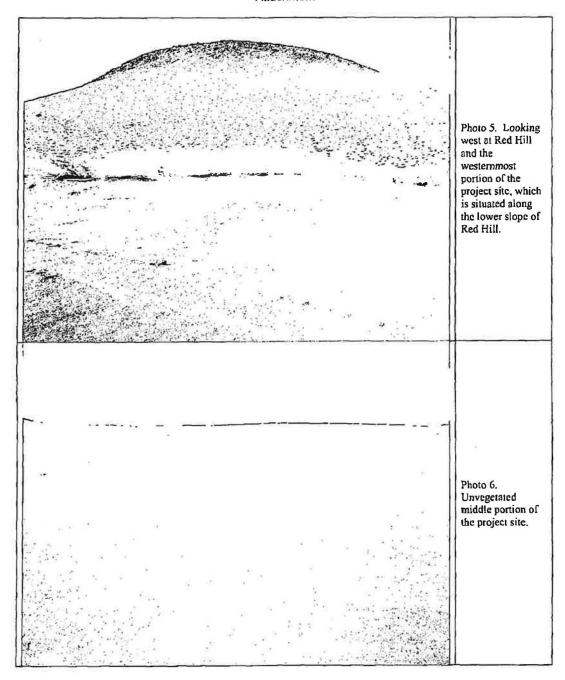




SITE PHOTOGRAPHS







Appendix A

#### Regulatory Framework

#### Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA)

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) administers the federal ESA of 1973. The ESA provides a legal mechanism for listing species as either threatened or endangered, and a process of protection for those species listed. Section 9 of the ESA prohibits "take" of threatened or endangered species. The term "take" means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in such conduct. "Take" can include adverse modification of habitats used by a threatened or endangered species during any portion of its life history. Under the regulations of the ESA, the USFWS may authorize "take" when it is incidental to, but not the purpose of, an otherwise lawful act. Take authorization can be obtained under Section 7 or Section 10 of the act.

#### California Endangered Species Act (CESA)

The CDFW, formerly Fish and Game, administers the State CESA. The State of California considers an endangered species one whose prospects of survival and reproduction are in immediate jeopardy. A threatened species is one present in such small numbers throughout its range that it is likely to become an endangered species soon, in the absence of special protection or management. And a rare species is one present in such small numbers throughout its range that it may become endangered if its present environment worsens. Rare species applies to California native plants. Further, all raptors and their nests are protected under Section 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code (FGC). Species that are California fully protected include those protected by special legislation for various reasons, such as the California condor. Species of Special Concern (SSC) is an informal designation used by CDFW for some declining wildlife species that are not proposed for listing as threatened or endangered. This designation does not provide legal protection, but signifies that these species are recognized as sensitive by CDFW.

#### Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA)

Nesting birds are protected under the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 (16 U.S.C 703-711). The MBTA provides protection for nesting birds that are both residents and migrants whether or not they are considered sensitive by resource agencies. The MBTA prohibits take of nearly all native birds. The MBTA makes it unlawful to take, possess, buy, sell, purchase, or barter any migratory bird listed under 50 CFR 10, including feathers or other parts, nests, eggs, or products, except as allowed by implementing regulations (50 CFR 21). The direct injury or death of a migratory bird, due to construction activities or other construction-related disturbance that causes nest abandonment, nestling abandonment, or forced fledging would be considered take under federal law. The USFWS, in coordination with the CDFW administers the MBTA. CDFW's authoritative nexus to MBTA is provided in FGC Sections 3503.5 which protects all birds of prey and their nests and FGC Section 3800 which protects all non-game birds that occur naturally in the State.

#### Clean Water Act (CWA)

The CWA is the principal federal law that governs pollution in the nation's lakes, rivers, and coastal waters. Originally enacted in 1972 as a series of amendments to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1948, the Act was last amended in 1987. The overriding purpose of the CWA is to "restore and maintain the chemical, physical and biological integrity of the nation's waters." The statute employs a variety of regulatory and non-regulatory tools to eliminate the discharge of pollutants into the nation's waters and achieve water quality that is both "swimmable and fishable".

Under Section 404 of the CWA, the Corps has primary federal responsibility for administering regulations

that concern the discharge of dredged or fill material into WoUS (including wetlands). WoUS are defined as: "All waters used in interstate or foreign commerce; all interstate waters including interstate wetlands; all other waters such as intrastate lakes, rivers, streams (including intermittent and ephemeral streams), mudflats, sand flats, wetlands, sloughs, prairie potholes, wet meadows, playa lakes or natural ponds, where the use, degradation, or destruction of which could affect interstate commerce; impoundments of these waters; tributaries of these waters; or wetlands adjacent to these waters" (Section 404 of the CWA; 33 CFR 328).

The limit of the Corps jurisdiction for non-tidal waters (including non-tidal perennial and intermittent watercourses and tributaries to such watercourses) in the absence of adjacent wetlands is defined by the ordinary high water mark (OHWM). The OHWM is defined as: "The line on the shore established by the fluctuations of water and indicated by physical characteristics such as a clear, natural line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in the character of soil, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris, or other appropriate means that consider the characteristics of the surrounding areas" (Section 404 of the CWA; 33 CFR 328). Wetlands are defined as: "Those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions" (Section 404 of the CWA; 33 CFR 328).

#### Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne)

The Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Porter-Cologne) is the principal State law that governs water protection efforts in California. Porter-Cologne establishes the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) and each of the nine Regional Water Quality Control Boards (RWQCBs) as the principal state agencies for coordinating and controlling water quality in California. The RWQCB's regulatory jurisdiction is pursuant to Section 401 of the Federal CWA. The RWQCB typically regulates discharges of dredged or fill material into WoUS. However, they also have regulatory authority over waste discharges into Waters of the State, which may be isolated, under Porter-Cologne. In the absence of a nexus with the Corps, the RWQCB requires the submittal of a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) application, which must include a copy of the project Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and a copy of the project Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP), otherwise called a Standard Urban Stormwater Management Plan (SUSMP). The RWQCB's role is to ensure that disturbances in the stream channel do not cause water quality degradation.

#### California Fish and Game Code (FGC)

Sections 1600 to 1616 of the California FGC require any person, state, or local government agency or public utility to notify the CDFW before beginning any activity that will substantially modify a river, stream, or lake. If it is determined that the activity could substantially adversely impact an existing fish and wildlife resource, then a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement is required.

Like the Corps and RWQCB, the CDFW also regulates discharges of dredged or fill material. The regulatory jurisdiction of CDFW is much broader however, than Corps or RWQCB jurisdictions. CDFW regulates all activities that alter streams and lakes and their associated habitats. The CDFW, through provisions of the FGC Sections 1601-1603 is empowered to issue agreements for any alteration of a river, stream, or lake where fish or wildlife resources may be adversely affected. Streams (and rivers) are defined by the presence of a channel bed and banks and at least an intermittent flow of water. The CDFW typically extends the limits of their jurisdiction laterally beyond the channel banks for streams that support riparian vegetation. In these situations, the outer edge of the riparian vegetation is generally used as the lateral extent of the stream and CDFW jurisdiction. CDFW regulates wetland areas only to the extent that those wetlands are a part of a river, stream, or lake as defined by CDFW.

# APPENDIX B SLOPE STABILITY EVALUATION REPORT TERRACON CONSULTANTS INC.



### Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002)

Rose Valley Area, California

June 29, 2020 Terracon Project No. CB205065

#### Prepared for:

Lilburn Corporation San Bernardino, California

#### Prepared by:

Terracon Consultants, Inc. Colton, California

0

June 29, 2020

Lilburn Corporation 1905 Business Center Drive San Bernardino, California 92408



Attn: Mr. Marty Derus - President

P: (909) 890-1818

E: marty@lilbumcorp.com

Re: Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002)

Quarry Road Area

Rose Valley Area, California Terracon Project No. CB205065

Dear Mr. Derus:

We have completed the Slope Stability Evaluation services for the above referenced project. This study was performed in general accordance with Terracon Proposal No. PCB205065, dated May 26, 2020. This report presents the findings of the site reconnaissance and provides recommendations concerning slope design for the proposed reclamation project.

We appreciate the opportunity to be of service to you on this project. If you have any questions concerning this report or if we may be of further service, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Terracon Consultants, Inc.

John S. McKeown, E.G. 2396 Senior Geologist Jay J. Martin, C.E.G.1529 Principal

Authorized Project Reviewer: Brian Williams

#### **REPORT TOPICS**

| INTRODUCTION             | 1 |
|--------------------------|---|
| SCOPE OF SERVICES        | 2 |
| PRIOR INVESTIGATIONS     | 3 |
| SITE DESCRIPTION         | 3 |
| FIELD RECONNAISSANCE     | 4 |
| SITE GEOLOGY             | 4 |
| SLOPE STABILITY          | 5 |
| FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS | 7 |
| GENERAL COMMENTS         |   |

**Note:** This report was originally delivered in a web-based format. **Orange Bold** text in the report indicates a referenced section heading. The PDF version also includes hyperlinks which direct the reader to that section and clicking on the **GeoReport** logo will bring you back to this page. For more interactive features, please view your project online at <u>client.terracon.com</u>.

#### **ATTACHMENTS**

SITE LOCATION AND SITE PLAN
KINEMATIC AND GLOBAL STABILITY CALCULATIONS

Note: Refer to each individual Attachment for a listing of contents.

## Slope Stability Evaluation Report Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) Rose Valley Area, California

Terracon Project No. CB205065 June 29, 2020

#### INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of our geologic reconnaissance and slope evaluation services performed for the proposed mine reclamation located in the Rose Valley Area, California. The purpose of these services is to provide information and geotechnical engineering recommendations for reclaimed cut and fill slopes at the quarry.

The Scope of Services for this project included review of documents, site reconnaissance, and evaluation of stable slope configurations for the planned reclamation. Our services were requested in part as a response to reclamation plan review by California Department of Conservation – Division of Mine Reclamation (DMR) dated May 14, 2020. The DMR review indicates a need for site-specific geotechnical and geologic analysis for final slopes and topography. This report provides the information related to the DMR request.

Maps showing the site location and configuration are shown in the **Site Location** and **Site Map** sections, respectively. The results of our evaluation, together with our conclusions and recommendations, are presented in this report.

#### PLANNED RECLAMATION

| ltem                 | Description  |  |  |  |  |
|----------------------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Information Provided | Various emails were received from you providing project information. These materials include the reclamation plan document, a due diligence report that includes drilling and testing information, and Notice letter from Inyo County regarding a reclamation plan submittal. The County noted several items to be addressed in the reclamation document.  |  |  |  |  |
| Project Description  | The existing Main Quarry is proposed to expand northwest by 8.5 acres and northeast by 13.7 acres, eventually expanding further northeast into the Northeast Quarry of about 35.5 acres along with associated access roads, processing areas, and two overburden stockpiles encompassing about 49 acres. Backfill of part of the quarry is proposed with material from the existing OB-3 stockpile. The resource at this quarry is volcanic cinder rock. |  |  |  |  |

#### Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) ■ Rose Valle June 29, 2020 ■ Terracon Project No. CB205065



| Item                          | Description   |  |  |  |  |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| Mining/Reclamation<br>Slopes  | Mining is currently conducted within the Phase 1 Main Quarry of approximately 49 acres as approved in the 1979 Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and will continue for up to 60 years. Active slopes may be as steep as 0.5 horizontal to 1 vertical (0.5H:1V) and will be pushed down or backfilled with non-commercial material to a reclaimed slope of no more than 1H:1V as required by the current CUP. Maximum depth will be approximately 150 feet below ground surface (bgs) with a variable pit floor elevation averaging approximately 3,250 feet amsl. Phase 2 mining is planned in a small northwestern 8.5-acre extension of the Main Quarry with 1.5H:1V slopes connecting to the Main Quarry. Mining on the west side of the Main Quarry will be below grade, and will remain behind natural ridging and be further blocked by views from US 395 by an approximate 10-foot high berm along the west areas as shown on the Mine Plan and as required by the existing CUP. During Phase 3, Overburden Stockpile 3 of about 14 acres in area and approximately 50 feet in height, will be pushed down into the floor of the Main Quarry and will be used to backfill any over steepened slopes. The raw cinders underneath will be mined to about 150 feet bgs. During Phase 4, mining will be initiated in the Northeast Quarry area located on approximately 35.5 acres. The quarry will be setback a minimum of 50 feet on the project boundaries to the east and north and setback about 100 feet from the base of the Red Hill Cinder Cone proper. Excavations are planned at 1H:1V to a depth of 150 feet. |  |  |  |  |
| Estimated Start of Excavation | Mining is ongoing   |  |  |  |  |

#### **SCOPE OF SERVICES**

We performed a slope stability investigation to address the stability of the proposed reclaimed slope configurations proposed to be formed in the volcanic rock units and stockpile fill materials. The slope stability analyses were also employed as the basis for recommendations for required stable slopes according to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA). Planned slope configurations were provided in the revised reclamation plan dated December 2018 as described above. A due diligence report by Steve Cortner dated February 15, 2015 provides drill log and groundwater level data for the site.

We reviewed the project-related documents and available aerial imagery to identify areas of interest for slope evaluation. We visited the site on June 4, 2020 and met with Mr. Ben Boyd who provided site safety and operations information. We collected field measurements of representative geologic structure in selected areas and examined the geologic materials for strength properties.

#### **Slope Stability Evaluation Report**

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) ■ Rose Valle June 29, 2020 ■ Terracon Project No. CB205065



We established the strength characteristics of rock and stockpile materials based on our database of UCS tests, laboratory testing, and slope stability application-based utilities. The Description of Site Conditions is derived from our site visit and review of available geologic and topographic maps.

We performed kinematic evaluation of characteristic geologic structure using stereonet plots for an existing cut slope and performed whole-slope global stability analyses of the tallest rock and stockpile slope configurations (representative) for static and seismic conditions in the proposed slope areas. Stockpile materials strengths were estimated from our experience with similar materials. The results of mapping and analysis, our findings of suitability of the proposed slope configurations, and recommendations for modifications of slope geometry, where warranted by analytical results, are presented in this report.

#### PRIOR INVESTIGATIONS

Steve Cortner, Land Use Consultants, Inc., performed a due diligence study dated February 23, 2015. This study evaluated site land title information/status, and included a drilling/sampling program for evaluation of reserve materials, groundwater, and depth of cinder deposits. Static groundwater was encountered at approximately 187 feet below ground surface (bgs) in a drill hole located near the western site boundary. Sand-and-gravel alluvium was encountered in this drill hole at 280 feet bgs.

The reclamation plan document dated December 2018 specifies the following slope configurations:

- Cut slopes in native cinders at ratio of 1(h) to 1(v) or flatter
- Backfill of steepened cut slopes to 1(h) to 1(v) with non-commercial material
- Fill slopes (stockpiles) at ratio of 2(h) to 1(v)
- Final quarry depth at 150 feet below surrounding grade

#### SITE DESCRIPTION

#### **AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH REVIEW**

Aerial imagery dated from May 1994 to July 2017 were examined for indications of past site usage and slope information. A highwall cut is visible along the northwest side of the main pit in 1994 and continuing to 2017. Additional cuts are visible in the southwest portion of the mine. The majority of cut slopes appear as relatively low-angle push-down-type slope created by top-down dozer work. Based on the recent field reconnaissance, it is evident that some prior cut areas are now partially backfilled. A small area of slope ravel is visible in the north highwall cut in imagery dated 2013 and 2017. This feature was noted during our field examination and is formed in a

#### Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) ■ Rose Valle. June 29, 2020 ■ Terracon Project No. CB205065



steep native cut in cinder material. We measured the cut slope angle in this area to be approximately 75- to 80-degrees locally. This slope is planned for backfill to the stockpile fill angle of 2H:1V upon reclamation.

#### FIELD RECONNAISSANCE

We examined site conditions on June 4, 2020. The mine consists of a primary pit area surrounded by low-angle slopes created by push-down dozer work and stockpile areas. A highwall, that was measured to be approximately 75- to 82-degrees locally and exhibited localized raveling, was present along the northwestern pit. We measured joint structure in this slope for localized kinematic evaluation. Some prior cut areas along this highwall are now partially backfilled. Stockpiles of sand and small gravel size material with slope modified by wind action were noted. Power poles were observed to be partially buried by migration of some stockpile areas.

#### SITE GEOLOGY

The mine utilizes cinder-size material emplaced as cone-erupted deposits from nearby Red Hill that overlay basalt flows of pahoehoe- and aa-type lavas. Cinders vary from black to red color and are sourced from localized eruption centers that changed location during emplacement activity. Native soils of light brown silty sandy alluvium overlie areas around the margin of the cinder deposits. Granitic basement rock underlies the volcanic pile. The cinders are very rough, angular clasts of abrasive siliceous rock material and are strongly interlocked by rough and angular contact. In cut slopes cinders stand at steep angles and exhibit planar joints that penetrate to depths up to 30 feet from native surface. Joints are locally filled with whitish caliche material. Cinders are not welded as in some volcanic piles and can be separated easily with a rock hammer; however, the material exhibits an effective cohesion from the rough and interlocked clast contacts.

Bedding planes exposed in limited cut slopes within the main pit area were measured to dip northward and eastward at angles of 50 to 60 degrees and 20 degrees, respectively. East dipping bedding was measured on a formerly-buried lava flow resting in contact with a cone flank. Bedding can be anticipated to vary throughout the site as construction of a volcanic pile is a somewhat random process that includes liquid material flow and air-fall actions. A northeast striking, steeply-dipping joint set dominated the structure of the north highwall area. A 70-degree southward dipping joint system was also noted. The cinder material is anticipated to exhibit relatively homogeneous materials properties at the proposed 1(h) to 1(v) cut slope angle.

#### SEISMIC CONSIDERATIONS

The site is situated 1.9 kilometers east of the mapped trace of the southern Sierra Nevada fault zone in a relatively high seismic region of southern California. Deaggregated peak ground

#### Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) ■ Rose Valle Ge
June 29, 2020 ■ Terracon Project No. CB205065



acceleration for a 2,475-year return period based on the USGS Hazard Tool web-based application is 0.76g.

The ground-shaking hazard at the site was also evaluated from a deterministic standpoint for use as a guide to formulate an appropriate seismic coefficient for use in slope stability analysis. The deterministic calculation of peak ground acceleration (PGA) was made using attenuation relations of Abrahamson and others (2014), Boore and others (2014), Campbell and Bozorgnia (2014) and Chiou and Youngs (2014). For the southern Sierra Nevada fault with a magnitude 7.5 at a distance of 1.9 kilometers, the estimated PGA is 0.59g.

The simplified procedure of Bray and Travasarou (2009) for selection of critical acceleration (Kh) as one-half PGA is commonly used for slope stability calculations for *habitable structures*. Their method is not typically required or applicable for quarry slope design. Given the project location in an area of moderate to high seismic potential, we used Kh = 0.20, consistent with Bray and Travasarou (2007), to approximate slightly less than one-half the value of PGA from the deterministic calculation for the closest fault and considering the purpose of the site.

#### **GROUNDWATER**

Static groundwater was encountered at approximately 187 feet bgs in a drill hole located near the western site boundary in 2015. Information available in California Department of Water Resources Water Data Library indicates a well located about 1 mile east of the site with Local ID 18-28 GTH. Measured water levels between October 2011 and March 2020 in this well were steady near Elevation 3,194 feet that correlates to a depth to water of about 172 feet bgs. Based on the 150-foot depth of planned mining, groundwater is not anticipated to occur within the depth of the proposed mining.

#### SLOPE STABILITY

Slope stability calculations of proposed reclamation slopes and kinematic analysis of potential failure geometries in the existing highwall cut were performed for this evaluation. The kinematic data include the measured geologic structures from limited site mapping. Global slope stability was evaluated along cross sections representing the tallest and steepest proposed slopes with consideration of the geologic units and materials strengths as they potentially affect the overall stability. A discussion and summary of these analyses are presented below. The slope stability data and calculations are attached.

#### **EXISTING HIGHWALL**

An existing highwall area (approximately 82-degree cut angle) is formed along the northern pit and provides a cinder exposure. No slopes at this inclination are planned for reclamation. This area is a temporary working face planned for phased backfill to achieve a 2(h) to (1) fill slope ratio

#### Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) ■ Rose Valle June 29, 2020 ■ Terracon Project No. CB205065



(27-degree slope). We measured joints developed in the cut face and plotted these for kinematic evaluation. Kinematic data indicate that cut slopes in cinder material are kinematically stable at the planned 1(h) to 1(v) [45-degree] slope angle. This slope is representative of the native cinder materials anticipated to be exposed in reclaimed cut slopes planned with an angle of 45 degrees or flatter. Stereonet plots for this area are attached. Based on these data, we conclude that the planned cut slopes in native material configured at a slope ratio of 1(h) to 1(v) [45 degrees] are kinematically stable and suitable for reclamation.

#### **GLOBAL STABILITY CALCULATIONS**

The global stability of proposed reclamation slopes, as depicted on the reclamation plan, was analyzed using Spencer's method under both static and seismic conditions for rotational and composite failure surfaces using the SLIDE computer program, version 8.029 (Rocscience., 2019). Selection of the slope configurations for the analysis, which includes the tallest anticipated slope, is a most-conservative approach.

The whole rock strength of the geologic units was determined in part by reference to UCS values presented by Del Potro and Hurlimann (2008), reference to our database of unconfined compressive strength (UCS) tests, and reference to a database of Generalized Hoek-Brown rock strength parameters included in the SLIDE software application. Values used in analysis are summarized in the following table.

| Red Hill Volcanics - Strength Parameters |                       |   |  |  |
|--|-----------------------|---|--|--|
| ê E. 9 9                                 | Value                 | Source  |  |  |
| Unit Weight (pcf*)                       | 80                    | reported drill data  Del Porto and Hurlimann (2008) and Rocscience tables |  |  |
| Intact UCS1 (psf**)                      | 1.00 x10 <sup>5</sup> |   |  |  |
| Geological Strength Index                | 50                    | Rocscience tables   |  |  |
| Intact Rock Constant (mi***)             | 13                    | Rocscience tables   |  |  |
| Disturbance Factor                       | 0.7                   | Mechanical excavation   |  |  |

pcf = pounds per cubic foot

Global slope stability calculations were performed on representative cut slopes modeled as 1(h) to 1(v) [45-degree] slopes up to 160 feet high. Mining may locally expose zones of flow-type lavas below cinders. Since these lavas are stronger and denser than cinder deposits, we use cinder strengths to represent the reclamation slope in calculations as a conservative modelling. The strength of stockpile fill and slope backfill was determined using the results of prior shear tests for similar stockpile material. The strength parameter values for slope backfill and stockpile fill are

presented in the attached slope stability calculations.

psf = pounds per square foot
mi = unitless constant

#### Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) ■ Rose Vall-June 29, 2020 ■ Terracon Project No. CB205065



The results of global slope stability analyses are summarized below. Details of stability calculations, including material type boundaries, strength parameters, and the minimum factor of safety and critical slip surface, are attached.

| Summary of Global Stability Results |            |                                    |                         |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|--|
| Model                               | Materials  | Slope Configuration                | Static Factor of Safety | Seismic Factor<br>of Safety<br>(k=0.2) |  |
| Native Cut                          | cinder     | 160 feet @ 1(h) to 1(v)<br>45 deg. | 1.90                    | 1.42                                   |  |
| Backfill Slope                      | Waste rock | 60 feet @ 1(h) to 1(v)<br>45 deg.  | 1.00                    | 0.73                                   |  |
| Backfill Slope<br>(Recommended)     | Waste rock | 60 feet @ 2(h) to 1(v) 27<br>deg.  | 1.68                    | 1.14                                   |  |
| Overburden<br>Stockpile             | Mixed OB   | 60 feet @ 27 deg. fill<br>slope    | 1.71                    | 1.12                                   |  |

The Backfill Slope configured at 1(h) to 1(v) does not exhibit sufficient Factors of Safety under static and seismic conditions for use in reclamation according to Office of Mine Reclamation (OMR). Therefore, we analyzed an alternative model using backfill at 2(h) to 1(v). Sufficient static factors of safety (FS) in excess of 1.5 and seismic factors of safety at or greater than 1.1—in conformance with (OMR) criteria—were indicated for the modeled 'Native Cut' slope, 'OB Stockpile' slopes and 'Recommended Backfill' slope configurations.

#### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Based on our geologic field observations and results of our slope stability analysis, it is the opinion of this firm that the proposed rock and OB stockpile reclamation slopes are feasible with respect to slope stability from a geotechnical standpoint. Cut slopes formed in the cinder unit are stable by calculation at angles of 45 degrees or flatter utilizing slopes up to 160 feet high.

Where existing cuts slopes are steeper than 1(h) to 1(v), they should be flattened to the reclamation cut angle (45 degrees) where space allows OR backfilled to 2(h) to 1(v) [27 degrees] or flatter.

The following slope heights/angles versus materials are considered feasible for reclamation:

 Rock materials including basalt and cinder – 1(h) to 1(v) [45 degrees] up to 160 feet in height

Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) ■ Rose Valle June 29, 2020 ■ Terracon Project No. CB205065



- Overburden Stockpile (OB) fill—2(h) to 1(v) [27 degrees] up to 60 feet in height
- Quarry backfill 2(h) to 1(v) [27 degrees] up to 60 feet in height

Based on the elevation of the proposed pit bottom, groundwater is not anticipated to occur within the maximum mined depth.

Moderate to severe seismic shaking of the site can be expected to occur during the lifetime of the proposed mining and reclamation. This potential has been considered in our analyses and evaluation of slope stability.

The proposed rock slope configurations are considered suitably stable under static and seismic conditions as reclaimed slopes. Inclusion of horizontal safety benches or ramps in final slope design is feasible if required and will reduce overall slope angle. Slopes may be protected with berms as necessary to prevent slope erosion in areas where overland flow is directed toward slopes.

The rock mass within the mine area is competent and capable of forming stable slopes at the proposed slope angles for reclamation. The rock structure includes bedding and joint systems that have been characterized by mapping and analysis to yield suitably stable rock slopes. At such time and locations as reclamation slopes are excavated, a qualified professional should examine the slope conditions to determine conformance with the reclamation plan.

Adjustment of near-surface slope angles OR removal of unconsolidated surface alluvium along pit margins will mitigate long-term raveling and erosion in this material.

Slow raveling processes during and after quarry operation, with time, may result in deposition of limited talus on slopes. Talus left on the slopes can facilitate revegetation and lend a more natural appearance to the reclaimed slopes. It is anticipated that rock fragments will be small, angular and relatively resistant to rolling. Therefore, rockfall hazard is not anticipated for properly excavated and prepared rock slopes.

Visual inspection of reclamation slopes should be performed to address the potential for unknown or newly exposed discontinuities/geologic conditions. If raveling or instability is evident due to features in the geologic structure, the slope angle may be decreased or a bench added to decrease the overall slope angle.

Mechanical excavation is suitable for developing interim and final mine slopes. When reclaimed slope faces are reached, excavation should be planned and controlled so that final slopes are constructed in accordance with the approved reclamation plan and to avoid excess disturbance to finished surfaces.

#### Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) ■ Rose Valle June 29, 2020 ■ Terracon Project No. CB205065



Provision of terraces and/or berms to convey surface drainage away from slope faces in overburden stockpile slopes may be considered for reclamation stockpile slopes.

This report is intended to address the proposed reclamation and is not applicable to working mine (interim) slopes which may be steeper and/or of different configuration than the reclamation plan.

#### **GENERAL COMMENTS**

Our analysis and opinions are based upon our understanding of the project, the geotechnical conditions in the area, and the data obtained from our site exploration. Natural variations will occur between exploration point locations or due to the modifying effects of construction or weather. The nature and extent of such variations may not become evident until during or after construction. Terracon should be retained as the Geotechnical Engineer, where noted in this report, to provide observation and testing services during pertinent construction phases. If variations appear, we can provide further evaluation and supplemental recommendations. If variations are noted in the absence of our observation and testing services on-site, we should be immediately notified so that we can provide evaluation and supplemental recommendations.

Our Scope of Services does not include either specifically or by implication any environmental or biological (e.g., mold, fungi, bacteria) assessment of the site or identification or prevention of pollutants, hazardous materials or conditions. If the owner is concerned about the potential for such contamination or pollution, other studies should be undertaken.

Our services and any correspondence or collaboration through this system are intended for the sole benefit and exclusive use of our client for specific application to the project discussed and are accomplished in accordance with generally accepted geotechnical engineering practices with no third-party beneficiaries intended. Any third-party access to services or correspondence is solely for information purposes to support the services provided by Terracon to our client. Reliance upon the services and any work product is limited to our client, and is not intended for third parties. Any use or reliance of the provided information by third parties is done solely at their own risk. No warranties, either express or implied, are intended or made.

Site characteristics as provided are for design purposes and not to estimate excavation cost. Any use of our report in that regard is done at the sole risk of the excavating cost estimator as there may be variations on the site that are not apparent in the data that could significantly impact excavation cost. Any parties charged with estimating excavation costs should seek their own site characterization for specific purposes to obtain the specific level of detail necessary for costing. Site safety, and cost estimating including, excavation support, and dewatering requirements/design are the responsibility of others. If changes in the nature, design, or location of the project are planned, our conclusions and recommendations shall not be considered valid unless we review the changes and either verify or modify our conclusions in writing.

Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) Rose Valle

GeoReport

GeoReport

Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) Rose Valle

GeoReport

June 29, 2020 Terracon Project No. CB205065

# REFERENCES

# **GEOLOGIC REFERENCES**

Del Potro, R. and Hurlimann, M. 2008, Geotechnical Classification and Characterisation of Materials for Stability Analysis of large Volcanic Slopes, Engineering Geology, volume 98, no.1.

Bray, J. D. and Travasarou, T.,. 2009 Pseudostatic Coefficient for Use in Simplified Seismic Slope Stability Evaluation, J. of Geotechnical and Geoenv. Engineering, ASCE, 135(9), 1336-1340.

California Department of Water Resources, 2020, http://www.water.ca.gov/waterdatalibrary.

Highland, L. M., and Bobrowsky, P., 2008, The Landslide Handbook – A Guide to Understanding Landslides: U.S. Geological Survey Circular 1325.

Hoek, E., and Karzulovic, A., 2000 Rock-Mass properties for surface mines. In Slope Stability in Surface Mining (Edited by W. A. Hustralid, M.K. McCarter and D.J.A. van Zyl), Littleton, CO: Society for Mining, Metallurgical and Exploration (SME), pages 59-70.

Hoek, E., Carranza-Torres, C., and Corkum, B., 2002. Hoek-Brown criterion – 2002 edition. Procedures of the. North American Rock Mechanics Symposium-Tunneling Association of Canada Conference, Toronto, 2002, 1, 267-273.

Petersen, Mark D., Frankel, Arthur D., Harmsen, Stephen C., Mueller, Charles S., Haller, Kathleen M., Wheeler, Russell L., Wesson, Robert L., Zeng, Yuehua, Boyd, Oliver S., Perkins, David M., Luco, Nicolas, Field, Edward H., Wills, Chris J., and Rukstales, Kenneth S., 2008, Documentation for the 2008 Update of the United States National Seismic Hazard Maps: U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 2008~1128, 61 p.

Rocscience, Inc., 2018, Dips computer software program, ver. 7.014: Graphical and statistical analysis of Orientation data.

Rocscience, Inc., 20198, SLIDE computer software program, ver. 8.029: 2D Limit equilibrium slope stability for soil and rock slopes.

Ryan, T. M., and Pryor, P. R., 2000, Designing catch benches and interramp slopes, in WA Hustrulid, MK McCarter & DJA Van Zyl (eds), Slope Stability in Surface Mining, SME, Colorado, pp. 27–38.

Seed, H. B., 1979, "Considerations in the Earthquake-Resistant Design of Earth and Rockfill Dams", Geotechnique, v. 29, no. 3, pp. 215-263.

Slope Stability Evaluation Report

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) 
Rose Valle June 29, 2020 
Terracon Project No. CB205065

lerracon GeoReport

# **AERIAL IMAGERY EXAMINED**

Google Earth, 2019, web-based software application, aerial imagery dated May 27, 1994; June 3, 2004; December 31, 2004; August 15, 2007; May 25, 2009; May 25, 2013; and July 1, 2017.

# **ATTACHMENTS**

. .

# SITE LOCATION

# Contents:

Site Location Plan

Site Map

Slope Stability Calculations

Note: All attachments are one page unless noted above.

SITE LOCATION

Amended Reclamation Plan for Red Hill Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) 

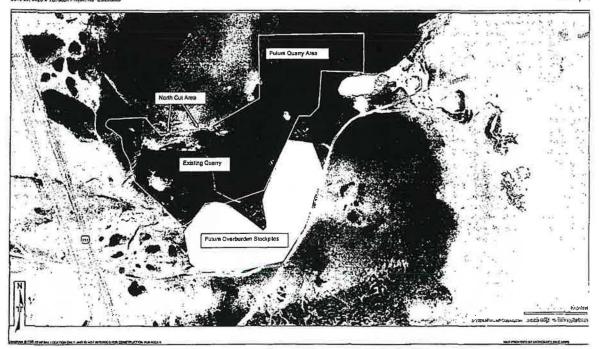
Rose Valley Area, Ca. GeoReport.

GeoReport.



SITE PLAN
Amended Rectamation Plan for Red HII Quarry (CA Mine ID 91-14-0002) a Rosa Valley Arga, Cafilomia
June 23, 2001; a Yermona Brainet No. PRINSWA.

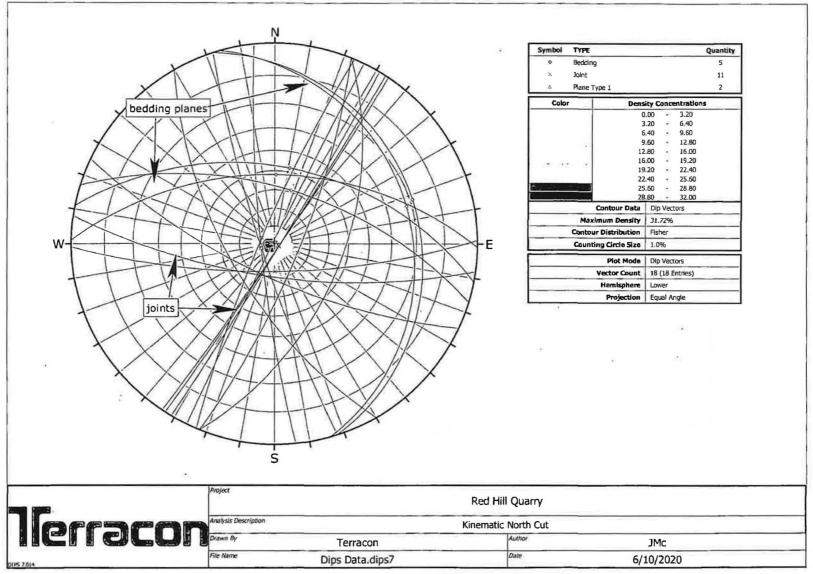


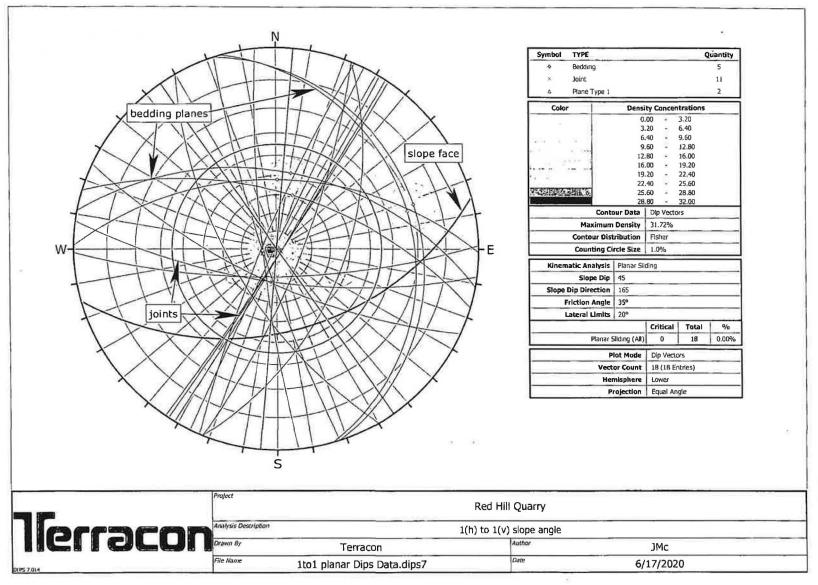


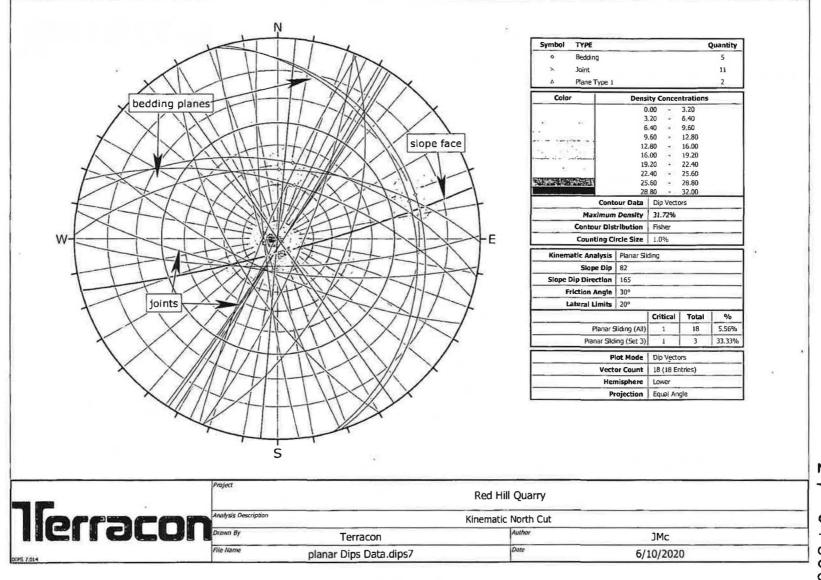
| Red Hill Mine North Highwall - Geological Structural Data |      |               |            |         |
|---|------|---------------|------------|---------|
| No.   | Dip  | Dip Direction | Continuity | Туре    |
| 1   | 59   | 017           | 2          | Bedding |
| 2   | 52   | 001           | 2          | Bedding |
| 3   | 48   | 011           | 2          | Bedding |
| 4   | 22   | 074           | 3          | Bedding |
| 5   | 19   | 072           | 3          | Bedding |
| 6   | 74   | 179           | 3          | Joint   |
| 7   | 71 • | 188           | 3          | Joint   |
| 8   | 71   | 205           | 3          | Joint   |
| 9   | 89   | 296           | 1 .        | Joint   |
| 10  | 82   | 293           | 1          | Joint   |
| 11  | 64   | 240           | 2          | Joint   |
| 12  | 87   | 121           | 1          | Joint   |
| 13  | 53   | 112           | 3          | Joint   |
| 14  | 76   | 112           | 1          | Joint   |
| 15  | 87   | 123           | 1          | Joint   |
| 16  | 87   | 124           | 1          | Joint   |
| 17  | 82   | 252           | 3          | Joint   |
| 18  | 82   | 264           | 3          | Joint   |

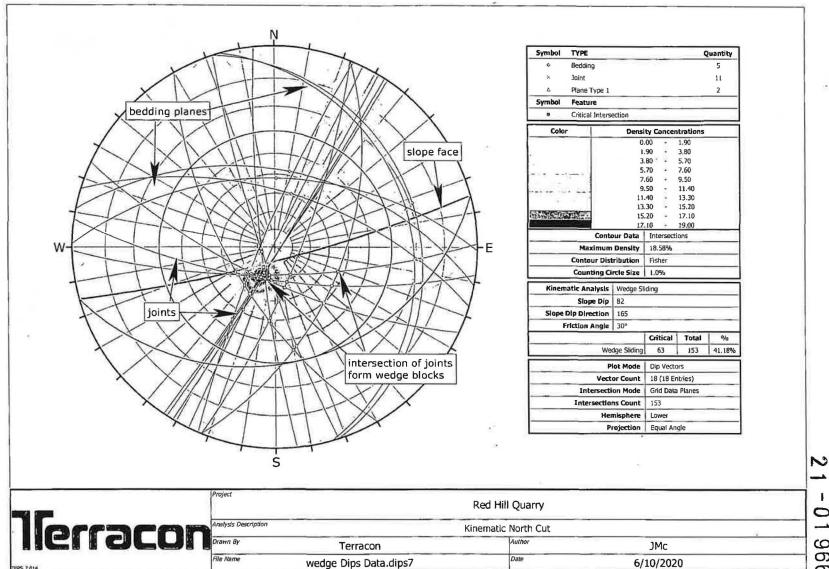
<sup>\*</sup> C1 - discontinuous (less than 3 ft.); C2 - slightly continuous (3 to 10 feet); C3 - moderately continuous (10 to 30 feet); C4 - highly continuous (30 to 100 feet); C5 - very continuous (greater than 100 feet).

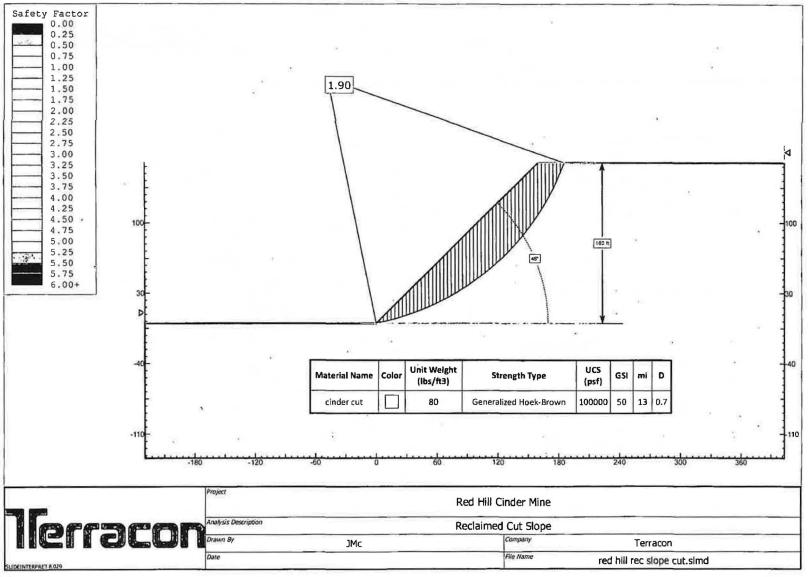
Based on Department of the Interior - Bureau of Reclamation, Engineering Geology Field Manual (2nd edition 1998)

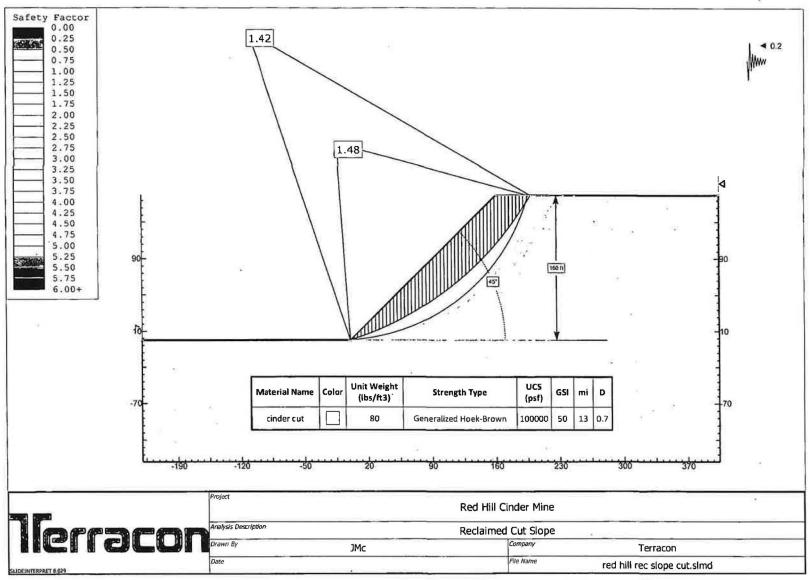


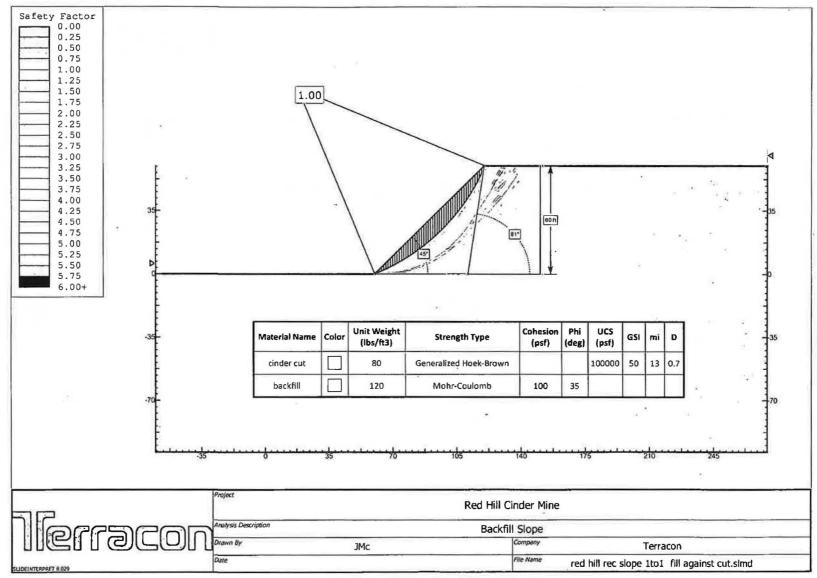


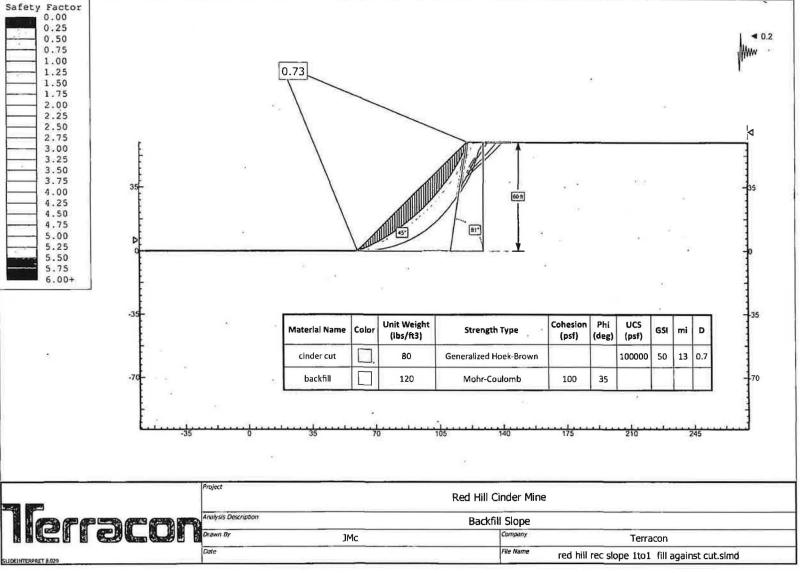


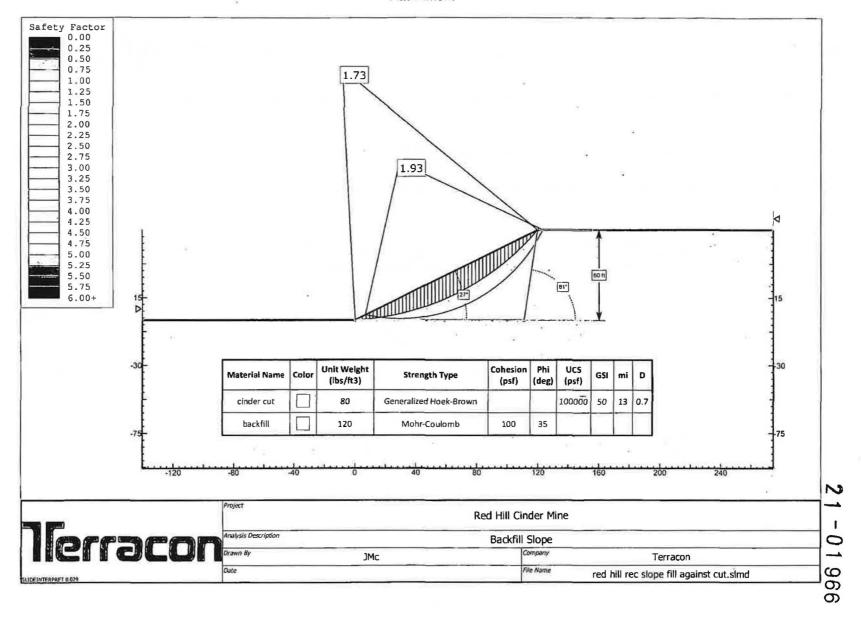


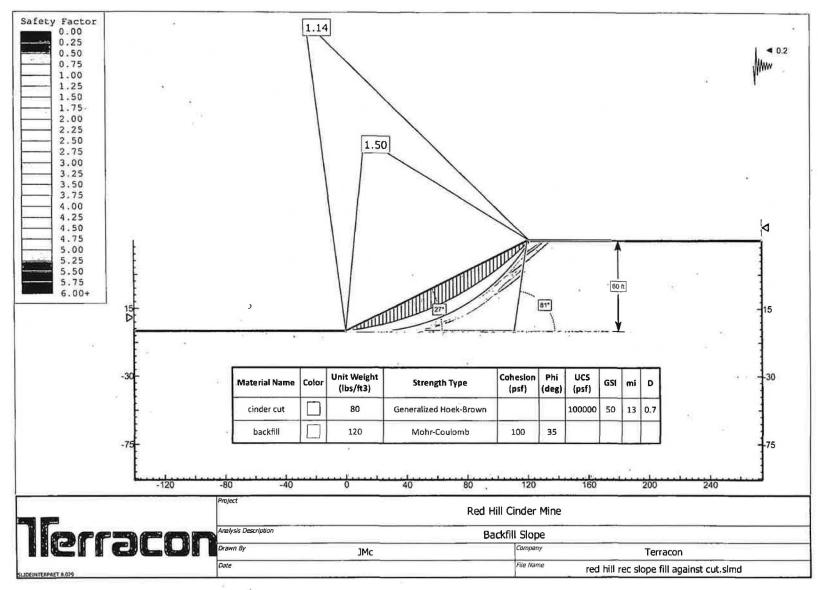


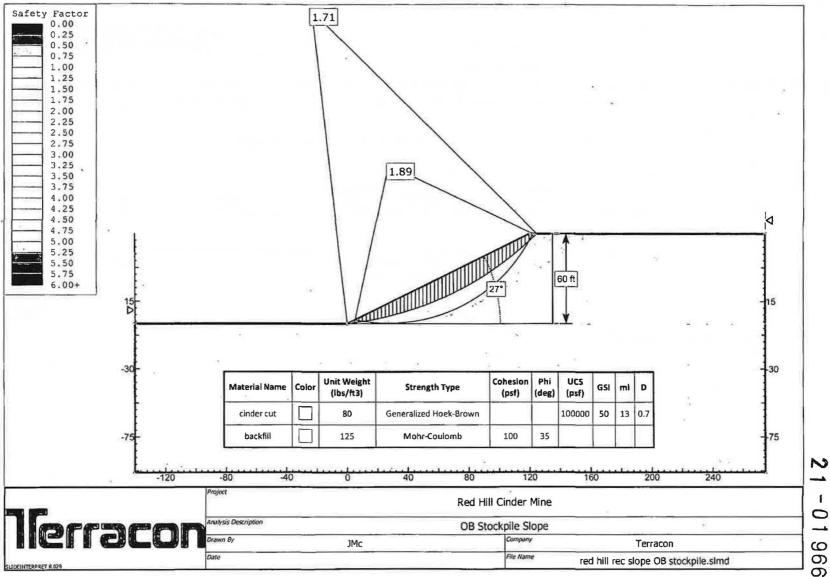


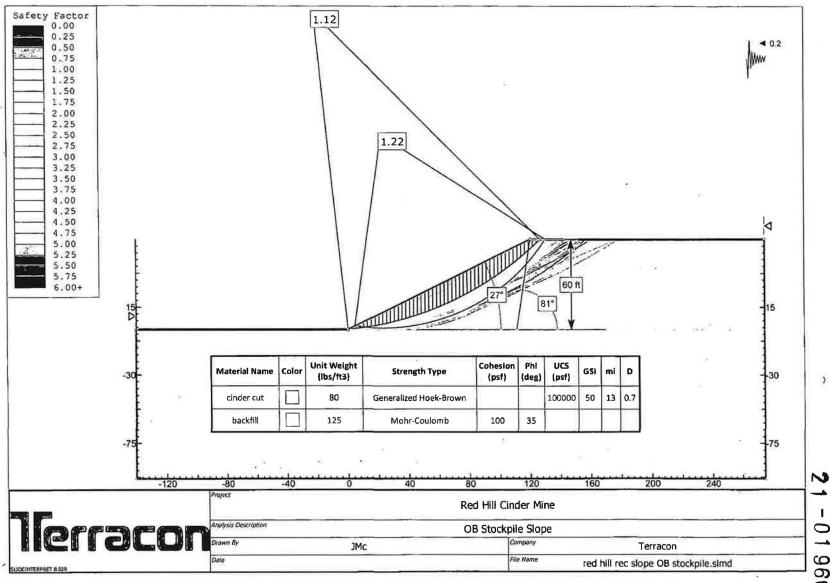




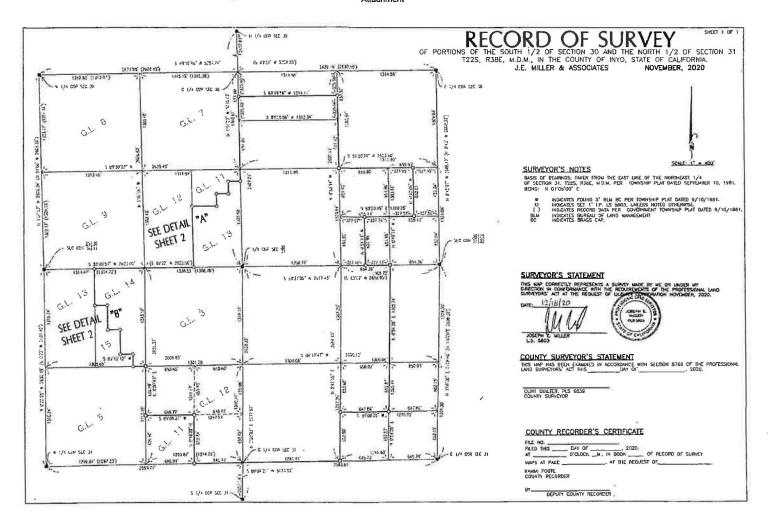








# APPENDIX C RECORD OF SURVEY J.E. MILLER & ASSOCIATES



21-01966