

KUNZLER TERRACE MINE PROJECT

Draft Environmental Impact Report
SCH 2008042108

Prepared for
Mendocino County

September 2009

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Granite Construction Company (Granite) proposes to develop a sand & gravel quarry on an approximately 65-acre site in unincorporated Mendocino County, approximately one mile north of the City of Ukiah (see **Figure 2-1**).

The project applicant, Granite Construction Company (Granite), has submitted an application to obtain approval of a use permit and mining and reclamation plan pursuant to the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA), and the Mendocino County Surface Mining and Reclamation Ordinance to excavate approximately 30.3 acres. The total amount of marketable material proposed for extraction is estimated at 3.37 million tons. Average yearly extraction would be 100,000 to 250,000 tons per year depending on market demand. The project proposes to extract aggregate from the mine to a maximum depth of 65 feet from ground surface in keeping with recommendations of the site-specific hydrogeologic assessment. The proposed project would operate year-round, Monday through Saturday, with normal operating hours of 5:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Rock and gravel screening would average 813 cubic yards per day and sand screening would average 438 cubic yards per day. A combination of wet and dry excavation would be used and the crushing operation will average 1000 cubic yards per day with a maximum of approximately 3500 cubic yards per day. The majority of the mined material would be hauled to either Granite's North State Street Plant for use in asphalt concrete or Granite's Talmage Processing Plant for Portland cement concrete production. Some aggregate may be shipped directly to local private and public construction sites, agricultural users, homeowners, and other customers.

Mining of site materials will be performed in a phased manner to allow for concurrent site reclamation. Mining would occur in three phases, with the fourth phase involving implementation of final reclamation and revegetation activities. Phase one of the project will also include stream bank enhancements and restoration work on Ackerman Creek and a portion of the Russian River. The end use of the project will be open space (ponds), with the northwestern portion of the property available for future industrial uses. The total life of the project is estimated to be 25 years, approximately twenty years for mining operations, with an additional five years to complete reclamation activities.

Issues of Concern

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082(a), a NOP and Initial Study Checklist (see Appendix C) for the project were circulated for a 30-day public review period that began on October 27, 2008 and ended on November 26, 2008. The NOP was circulated to the public, as well as to interested parties, local, state, and federal agencies. The purpose of the NOP was to inform the interested parties that the project could have significant effects on the environment and to solicit their comments.

No comment letters were received during the 30-day scoping period. At the scoping meeting the following issues were raised:

- Biology: Pit capture during flood events on the Russian River and effects to fisheries
- Traffic: Local traffic impacts on Kunzler Ranch Road and degradation of the road section

During the early consultation period the following issues were raised by public agencies:

- Fire Safety: Adequate fire flows and access [Ukiah Valley Fire District]
- Hydrology and Water Quality: Surface water quality, effects on local wastewater treatment, effects to groundwater, effects on the floodplain. [City of Ukiah]
- Rail Impacts: Proximity to and safety impacts of Northwestern Pacific RR tracks [CPUC]
- Traffic Impacts: Impacts to Highway on/off ramps [Caltrans]

Issues to be resolved include the consideration of the alternative reclamation plan (Alternative 3, identified below), in order to mitigate Impact 3.4.4.

Two planning issues to be resolved are the placement of Measure A on the 2009 ballot and the Feasibility Study for the Redemeyer Road Extension. Measure A would change the general plan land use classification of the nearby Masonite property (southwest of the project site) from Industrial to Mixed Use Specific Plan (MUSP). MUSP would allow a range of uses from commercial, including regional commercial (or “big box”), to residential (up to 150 dwelling units). As discussed in Section 3.9, Land Use, this proposed general plan amendment plan is not an “applicable general plan” or “adopted plan” within the meaning of CEQA (see Guidelines Section 15125).

Regarding the latter issue, the County has prepared a feasibility study to address the issue of access between the Ukiah road network to the Redemeyer Road area east of the Russian River (which currently only has one access point across the river). Alignment D1, one of five alternatives studied, would transect the project site. Adoption of this alignment would require major revisions to the project, or render it infeasible. However, County analysis indicates that Alignment D1 is too far south to meet the intended purpose of the road extension.

Issues Considered and Found Not To Be Significant

An EIR shall focus on the significant impacts to the environment (Guidelines §15143). Issues identified during the scoping process as not being significant are discussed below. The following issues were identified by the County during the scoping process as not significant and therefore, were not evaluated further in this DEIR, as discussed in more detail below.

Population and Housing

The project would not induce substantial population growth, either directly or indirectly, as the majority of jobs created could be filled by local citizens and because the production of aggregate resources is driven by market conditions stemming from growth. The site, rural in nature, would not displace any housing or persons. The potential for indirect growth inducement is discussed further in Chapter 5.

Recreation

The project would not result in an increase in population and would not result in increased usage of recreational facilities. The project would not affect existing recreational facilities.

Alternatives to the Proposed Project

The purpose of the alternatives analysis in an EIR is to describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project that could feasibly attain the objectives of the project, and to evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a)).

Additionally, CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(b) requires consideration of alternatives that could avoid or substantially lessen any significant adverse environmental effects of the proposed project, including alternatives that may be more costly or could otherwise impede the project's objectives. The range of alternatives considered must include those that offer substantial environmental advantages over the proposed project and may be feasibly accomplished in a successful manner considering economic, environmental, social, technological, and legal factors.

The following alternatives are discussed in Chapter 4, "Alternatives:"

- Alternative 1 – "No Project" Alternative
- Alternative 2 – Off-site Alternative
- Alternative 3 – On-site Alternative

Summary of Environmental Impacts

Table ES-1 presents a summary of project impacts and proposed mitigation measures that would further avoid or minimize potential impacts. It also indicates the level of significance of each environmental impact both before and after the application of the recommended mitigation measure(s).

For detailed discussions of all project impacts and mitigation measures, see Chapter 3, "Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures."

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
3.1. Aesthetics			
3.1.1: Implementation of the project would not adversely impact any scenic views.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.1.2: Implementation of the project has the potential to substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.1.2: Implementation of the project has the potential to create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.2. Agricultural Resources			
3.2.1: Implementation of the proposed project would result in the permanent conversion of land designated by the Department of Conservation FMMP as <i>Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance or Unique Farmland</i> .	Potentially significant	No feasible mitigation	Significant and unavoidable
3.2.2: Mining activities would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act contract.	No impact	None required	No impact
3.2.3: Mining activities could result in offsite impacts to adjacent agricultural lands.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.3. Air Quality			
3.3.1: Project operations, including the processing plant, off-road equipment, haul trucks, employee trips, and sources of fugitive dust (unpaved areas, storage piles, etc), would generate criteria pollutant emissions.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.3.2: Project operation would not create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.3.3: Implementation of the project may lead to increases in chronic exposure of nearby sensitive receptors to certain toxic air contaminants from various stationary and mobile sources	Potentially significant	<p>3.3.3: The applicant shall implement one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 percent of off-road mining equipment with 50 horsepower or greater used in mining operations shall be equipped with CARB verified Level 3 emission control technologies. Such technology would reduce particulate 	Less than significant

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
		<p>matter emissions by 85 percent or greater or to a level of less than 0.01 g/bhp-hr.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilize a conveyer belt system to transport aggregate from the pits to the processing area. 	
3.3.4: The project could conflict with implementation of state goals for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and thereby have a negative effect on global climate change.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.3.5: Development and operation of the project would result in a cumulative increase of criteria pollutant emissions.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.4. Biological Resources			
3.4.1: Mining, reclamation, restoration, and floodplain benching has the potential to result in adverse impacts to raptors (including osprey) and other migratory or nesting birds.	Potentially significant	<p>3.4.1: The following measures shall be implemented to reduce potential impacts on nesting birds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A qualified biologist shall conduct a preconstruction survey of all potential nesting habitats within 30 days prior to the start of activities (grubbing, dirt-moving, mobilization, or other construction-related activities) and within 500 feet of construction activities. If ground-disturbing activities are delayed or suspended for more than 30 days after the pre-construction survey, the site shall be resurveyed. The results of these surveys shall be documented in a technical memorandum that shall be submitted to the California Department of Fish and Game (if special-status birds are documented) and/or Mendocino County. If an active nest is found during the preconstruction survey, coordination with the California Department of Fish and Game will be required to determine the appropriate protective measures. If the preconstruction survey indicates that nests are inactive or potential habitat is unoccupied during the construction period, no further mitigation is required. Trees and shrubs that have been determined to be unoccupied by birds or that are located more than 500 feet from active nests may be removed (500 feet is the distance regularly recommended by DFG to prevent impacts to active raptor and other avian nests). If an active nest is located within 250 feet of the proposed project site, a biologist shall monitor the nest weekly during mining, reclamation, restoration, and benching activities to evaluate potential nesting disturbances caused by construction activities. The biological monitor will have the authority to stop 	Less than significant

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
<p>3.4.2: Mining, reclamation, restoration, and floodplain benching associated with the proposed project has the potential to result in adverse impacts to northwestern pond turtle.</p>	Potentially significant	<p>work if work appears to be resulting in nest abandonment or forced fledging. No trees with active nests shall be removed until the nest is determined to be inactive.</p> <p>3.4.2a: No more than two weeks prior to the commencement of ground-disturbing activities, the applicant will retain a qualified biologist to perform surveys for northwestern pond turtle within suitable aquatic and upland habitat on the project site. Surveys will include northwestern pond turtle nests as well as individuals. The biologist (with the appropriate agency permits) will temporarily relocate any identified northwestern pond turtles upstream of the construction site, and temporary barriers will be placed around the construction site to prevent ingress.</p> <p>Construction shall not proceed until the work area is determined to be free of turtles and their nests. The biologist will be responsible for relocating adult turtles that move into the construction zone after construction has begun. If a nest is located within a work area, the biologist (with the appropriate permits from the CDFG) may move the eggs to a suitable facility for incubation, and release hatchlings into the creek system in late fall. The biologist will be present on the project site during initial ground clearing and grading, mining, reclamation, restoration, and floodplain benching, and during all other construction activities adjacent to drainages with the potential to support northwestern pond turtle.</p> <p>The results of these surveys shall be documented in a technical memorandum that shall be submitted to the California Department of Fish and Game (if turtles are documented) and/or Mendocino County.</p>	Less than significant
<p>3.4.3: Reclamation and floodplain benching has the potential to result in adverse impacts to special-status salmonids.</p>	Potentially significant	<p>3.4.3: The following measures will avoid or minimize potential construction-related impacts to special-status salmonids present in the vicinity of project site:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All construction activities within the Russian River and Ackerman Creek will be restricted to low-flow periods of June 15 through October 15. Longer in-water work periods may be approved only in consultation with NOAA Fisheries. 2. If construction activities within actively flowing channels are necessary, water from around the construction area will be diverted around the construction area using a sheet pile coffer dam or similar technique. 3. Sediment curtains will be placed downstream of the construction zone to prevent sediment disturbed during coffer dam installation from being transported and deposited outside of the construction zone. 4. Prior to construction of the placement of the sediment curtains and installation of the coffer dam, a qualified fisheries biologist will conduct fish relocation activities, and immediately release captured fish to a suitable habitat near the project site. Capture and relocation activities will be conducted in accordance 	Less than significant

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
		with the Guidelines for Electrofishing Waters Containing Salmonids Listed under the Endangered Species Act (NMFS, 2000).	
		5. A qualified fisheries biologist shall monitor the construction site during placement and removal of the cofferdams, as well as during dewatering of the construction site, to ensure that adverse effects to special-status fish species are minimized and to capture and relocate, if necessary, and special-status fish stranded within the coffer dam.	
		6. Silt fencing will be installed in all areas where construction occurs within 100 feet of the channel.	
		7. Spoil sites will be located so they do not drain directly into the waterways. If a spoil site drains into a water body, catch basins will be constructed to intercept sediment before it reaches the channels. Spoil sites will be graded to reduce the potential for erosion.	
		8. A spill prevention plan for potentially hazardous materials will be prepared and implemented. The plan will include the proper handling and storage of all potentially hazardous materials, as well as the proper procedures for cleaning up and reporting of any spills. If necessary, containment berms will be constructed to prevent spilled materials from reaching the creek channels.	
		9. Equipment and materials will be stored at least 50 feet from waterways. No debris such as trash and spoils will be deposited within 100 feet of waterways. Staging and storage areas for equipment, materials, fuels, lubricants and solvents, will be located outside of the stream channel and banks. Stationary equipment such as motors, pumps, generators, compressors and welders, located within or adjacent to the stream will be positioned over drip pans. Any equipment or vehicles driven and/or operated within or adjacent to the stream will be checked and maintained daily, to prevent leaks of materials that if introduced to water could be deleterious to aquatic life. Vehicles will be moved away from the stream prior to refueling and lubrication.	
		10. Proper and timely maintenance for vehicles and equipment used during construction will be provided to reduce the potential for mechanical breakdowns leading to a spill of materials into or around the creeks. Maintenance and fueling will be conducted in an area that meets the criteria set forth in the spill prevention plan (i.e., away from sensitive drainages).	
		11. Water for dust abatement, if necessary, shall be acquired from an off-site source.	
		12. A qualified biological monitor will be on site during construction activities. The biological monitor will be authorized to halt construction if impacts to special-	

**TABLE ES-1
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Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
		status salmonid species are evident.	
		13. Current riparian vegetation will be retained to extent feasible.	
3.4.4: Operation of the terrace mining project has the potential to result in stranding or entrapment of special-status salmonids.	Potentially significant	<p>3.4.4:</p> <p>Mining Phase For the duration of the estimated 20-year mining phase of the proposed project, Granite shall develop and implement a salmonid rescue and relocation program in consultation with NMFS and CDFG. The program shall be implemented subsequent to overtopping events. Mining activities shall be halted until salmonid rescues have been completed. This measure will minimize entrapment of salmonids in the pit to greatest extent feasible.</p> <p>Reclamation Phase Option A. Prior to completion of reclamation, Granite shall, in coordination with NMFS and CDFG, design and construct an alternative reclamation design consistent with the extended hydrologic connection concept discussed above during the 5-year reclamation phase (see also Chapter 4, Project Alternatives). If, during coordination with NMFS and CDFG, regulatory agency staff determine that the potential adverse water quality effects within the pit would outweigh the expected benefits to salmonid habitat, Granite shall not implement this mitigation measure.</p> <p>Option B. Granite shall maintain a salmonid rescue and relocation program in consultation with NMFS and CDFG until it is determined by those agencies that such a program is no longer necessary.</p>	Less than significant
3.4.5: Mining, reclamation, restoration, and floodplain benching associated with the proposed project would not affect potentially jurisdictional wetlands and would not adversely affect waters of the U.S.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.4.6: Mining, reclamation, restoration, and floodplain benching associated with the proposed project has the potential to result in adverse impacts to riparian habitat.	Potentially significant	<p>3.4.5: The following measures will avoid or minimize potential construction-related impacts to riparian habitat:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prior to removal of any trees, an ISA Certified Arborist shall conduct a tree survey in areas that may be impacted by construction activities. This survey shall document tree resources that may be adversely impacted by implementation of the proposed project. The survey will follow standard professional practices. 2. Current riparian vegetation will be retained to extent feasible. A Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) shall be established around any tree or group of trees to be retained. The TPZ will be delineated by an ISA Certified Arborist. The TPZ shall be defined by the radius of the dripline of the tree(s) plus one foot. The TPZ of any protected trees shall be demarcated using fencing that will remain 	Less than significant

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Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
		<p>in place for the duration of construction activities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Construction-related activities shall be limited within the TPZ to those activities that can be done by hand. No heavy equipment or machinery shall be operated within the TPZ. Grading shall be prohibited within the TPZ. No construction materials, equipment, or heavy machinery shall be stored within the TPZ. 4. To ensure that there is no net loss of riparian habitat, Granite shall create or restore riparian habitat that is of a like function and value to the habitats lost. This mitigation shall include compensation for the loss of 1.7 acres of riparian habitat. This mitigation shall include the planting of 2.7 acres of floodplain/mixed riparian, 1.3 acres of mixed riparian, and 1.5 acres of oak woodland. The planting associated with the floodplain benching is a component of Phase I of the project and shall occur as soon as possible after the removal of the existing riparian vegetation. See the Kunzler Terrace Mine Reclamation Plan (Granite, 2008) for the floodplain construction and restoration plan specifics. This plan also includes performance standards for revegetation that will ensure successful restoration of the riparian areas. 5. The project applicant will replace any trees removed to ensure no net loss of habitat functions or values. All trees planted will be purchased from a locally adapted genetic stock obtained within 50 miles of the project site. Oak species shall be replaced at a 3:1 ratio. All other species shall be replaced at a 2:1 ratio. 	
3.5. Cultural Resources			
3.5.1: The proposed project could adversely impact known and unknown cultural resources, including unique archaeological resources and historic resources.	Potentially significant	<p>3.5.1a: CA-MEN-3111H shall be avoided during all project related actions or activities. If avoidance is not possible, an assessment should be completed by a qualified Architectural Historian to determine whether CA-MEN-3111H is eligible for inclusion on the California Register of Historical Resources or the National Register of Historic Places. Tasks necessary for the completion of such an evaluation may include, and are not limited to, further documentary research, resource site visit and condition assessment, the identification and recordation of any associated structural features such as historic-period culverts or bridges, and the completion of eligibility applications (if necessary). A technical report detailing the methodology and results, as well as significance and eligibility assessment shall be drafted for submission.</p> <p>3.5.1b: As a result of previous archaeological studies and recommendations, as well as recommendations made by consulted Native American individuals, an archaeological monitoring plan should be developed and implemented by a qualified archaeologist who meets the Secretary of Interior's Standards, in consultation with the Lead Agency and local Native American representatives. Specific monitoring scheduling and protocols will be defined by the archaeological</p>	Less than significant

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SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
		<p>monitoring plan; at a minimum full-time archaeological monitoring should occur during all ground-disturbing activities within 200 feet of CA-MEN-3111H, Ackerman Creek, and the Russian River. The archaeological monitor is responsible for the completion of daily monitoring logs and will likewise document and photograph any cultural materials discovered during ground-disturbing activities. Should previously unknown archaeological or historical resources be encountered, Mitigation Measure 3.5.1c must be implemented. Should previously unknown human burials or remains be encountered during project activities, Mitigation Measure 3.5.2 must be implemented.</p> <p>3.5.1c: Should prehistoric or historic subsurface cultural resources be discovered during project-related activities, all work within 50 feet of the find shall stop and a qualified archaeologist shall be contacted to document the discovery, evaluate the potential resource, and assess the significance of the find in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. If any find is determined to be significant, the project proponent and the archaeologist shall develop, in consultation with local Native Tribes, a cultural resources recovery and treatment plan. This plan shall establish appropriate protocol and further action necessary in order to preserve the resource or otherwise establish appropriate mitigation that will minimize further adverse impact. Significant cultural materials recovered shall be, as necessary and at the discretion of the consulting archaeologist, subject to scientific analysis, professional museum curation, and documentation according to current professional standards.</p>	
3.5.2: The proposed project could potentially impact previously unidentified human remains.	Potentially significant	3.5.2: If human skeletal remains are uncovered during project construction, work in the vicinity of the find shall cease and the Mendocino County coroner will be contacted to evaluate the remains, following the procedures and protocols set forth in Section 15064.5 (e)(1) of the <i>CEQA Guidelines</i> . If the County coroner determines that the remains are Native American, the project proponent will contact the Native American Heritage Commission, in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5, subdivision (c), and Public Resources Code 5097.98 (as amended by AB 2641), who will identify a Most Likely Descendent, who will make recommendations for the treatment of any human remains.	Less than significant
3.5.3: The proposed project could potentially impact a unique paleontological resource, or site, or unique geologic feature.	Potentially significant	3.5.3: In the event that paleontological resources are discovered, the project proponent will retain a qualified paleontologist. The paleontologist will document the discovery as needed, evaluate the potential resource, and assess the significance of the find under the criteria set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. If fossil or fossil bearing deposits are discovered during construction, excavations within 50 feet of the find will be temporarily halted or diverted until the discovery is examined by a qualified paleontologist (in accordance with Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards (Society of Vertebrate Paleontology, 1995). The paleontologist will notify the appropriate agencies to determine procedures that would be followed before construction is allowed to resume at the location of the find. If the project proponent determines that avoidance is not feasible, the paleontologist will prepare an	Less than significant

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
		excavation plan for mitigating the effect of the project on the qualities that make the resource important. The plan will be submitted to the project proponent for review and approval prior to implementation.	
3.6. Geology, Soils & Seismicity			
3.6.1: Temporary and permanent excavation slopes could be subject to failure due to earthquake induced landslides. Failure of temporary slopes in an active mining environment could injure workers, disrupt mining activities, and potentially result in increased erosion.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.6.2: Activities associated with mining operations that cause disturbance of surface soils, native, non-native, and non-engineered material could contribute to localized erosion. Erosion processes which could occur include, but are not limited to, concentrated short-term and/or long-term erosion, debris flows, slow soil creep, and/or localized slumping.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.6.3: The proposed project in combination with other projects in the past, present or foreseeable future would have a cumulative impact related to Geology, Soils, and Seismicity.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.7. Hazards and Hazardous Materials			
3.7.1: The proposed project may create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.	Potentially significant	3.7.1: The project applicant shall ensure, through the enforcement of contractual obligations, that all contractors transport, store, and handle construction related hazardous materials in a manner consistent with relevant regulations and guidelines, including those recommended and enforced by the California Department of Transportation, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and MCEHD, such as the Storage Statement and a Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan and the Hazardous Materials Management Plan prepared as part of the proposed project. The project applicant shall also ensure that all contractors immediately control the source of any leak and immediately contain any spill utilizing appropriate spill containment and countermeasures as outlined in the Spill Prevention Plan. If required by any regulatory agency, contaminated media shall be collected and disposed of at an offsite facility approved to accept such media. In addition, all precautions required by the RWQCB-issued NPDES construction activity storm water permits will be taken to ensure that no hazardous materials enter any nearby waterways.	Less than significant

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
3.7.2: Implementation of the proposed project has the potential for existing and/or previously unidentified contamination to be encountered during proposed project site preparation, construction activities, and mining activities.	Potentially significant	3.7.2: If contaminated soil and/or groundwater are encountered or suspected contamination is encountered during project construction or mining activities on the proposed project site, work shall be halted in the area, and the type and extent of the contamination shall be identified. A qualified professional, in consultation with the overseeing regulatory agency (RWQCB, DTSC, and/or MCEHD) shall then develop an appropriate method to remediate the contamination, and determine the appropriate handling and disposal method of any contaminated soil and/or groundwater. If required, a remediation plan shall be implemented in conjunction with continued project construction or operations.	Less than significant
3.7.3: The proposed project site is listed on a database for hazardous materials and hazardous wastes, but a review of the information indicates that development of the proposed project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.7.4: The proposed project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.8. Hydrology and Water Quality			
3.8.1: Construction and operation activities associated with the proposed project, including grading and excavation as well as the stockpiling of soils, have the potential to increase surface erosion and subsequently violate surface water quality standards pertaining to turbidity and sedimentation.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.8.2: Spills or leakage of oil and gas products (i.e., petroleum hydrocarbons) could result in the contamination of surface water and/or groundwater resources and violation of water quality standards pertaining to such contaminants	Potentially significant	3.8.2: The following requirements and provisions shall be incorporated in the SPCCP for the proposed project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fuels and lubricants would be stored in approved double-walled containers. • Waste oils and lubricants would be stored in approved containers and secondary containments. Waste oils would be removed from the site as needed by a licensed petroleum products recycling contractor. • Refueling and maintenance activities involving the fuel and lubrication truck shall take place no closer than 100-feet from the top of the pit slope. • The above ground diesel fuel tank shall be placed no closer than 100-feet from the top of the pit slope. 	Less than significant

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
3.8.3: The water demand for the proposed project, including consumptive uses and evaporative losses from the pits during the operation and reclamation phases, could result in the depletion of the shallow aquifer volume and a lowering of local water table elevations.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.8.4: The proposed project would alter the gradient of the local groundwater table and, as a result, change the static groundwater elevations within the immediate vicinity of the project site. This could result in physical damage to nearby wells caused by depressed static water levels below the top of the well screen or a loss of yield such that there is an appreciable diminution in the quantity or quality of water.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.8.5: The quality of the water within the pit, during both the operation and reclamation phases, could directly and negatively impact the quality of groundwater in the shallow aquifer, and/or within the Russian River or Ackerman Creek, in such a manner as to violate existing water quality standards or otherwise degrade water quality.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.8.6: The proposed project would alter the drainage pattern of both the floodplain and the active stream channels (Ackerman Creek and the Russian River), this could result in substantial erosion and/or sedimentation during flood events (e.g., pit capture, or release of stored sediments).	Potentially significant	3.8.6: The condition of the weir shall be inspected annually (in the spring, prior to May 1st) for stability. The inspection shall be performed by a professional engineer licensed in the State of California. Any erosion or undercutting of the weir base or perimeter, or other factors that could impact weir stability, shall be noted and repaired immediately. An inspection of the setback areas shall also be performed annually (at the same time as weir inspection), with emphasis upon the topographic low points (such as the location near the southeast corner of the project site where the pit would begin draining to the Russian River when full). Any substantial erosion shall be noted (i.e., evidence of gulying or head-cutting across the ground surface) and repaired immediately (e.g., using turf reinforcement mats [TRM], rock, or other similar approaches). All repairs or maintenance activities shall be completed by October 1st of the same year. Granite shall submit an inspection report to Mendocino County staff each year documenting the results of the inspection and, if repairs or maintenance are necessary, providing a work plan for addressing all noted issues. Granite shall incur all responsibilities and costs for inspection, maintenance, and repair for the life of the proposed project. Prior to completion of the proposed project, a deed restriction (in form and substance acceptable to the County Counsel) shall be recorded against the property such that this mitigation measure is made a	Less than significant

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
		condition of property ownership and would be applicable in perpetuity.	
3.8.7: The proposed project would alter the drainage pattern of both the floodplain and the active stream channels (Ackerman Creek and the Russian River) within the project area, this could impact surface water elevations during flood events such that the extent of on- or off-site flooding would increase.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.9. Land Use			
3.9.1: The proposed project will not physically divide an established community.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.9.2: The proposed project would not conflict with an applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.10 Noise			
3.10.1: Construction, operation, and reclamation activities associated with the proposed project would not generate noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plans or noise ordinances.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.10.2: Traffic associated with operation of the project could result in an increase in ambient noise levels on nearby roadways used to access the mine.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.10.3: Increases in traffic from the project in combination with other development could result in cumulative noise increases.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.11. Public Services, Utilities & Recreation			
3.11.1: Implementation of the project may increase the need for additional law enforcement and fire protection services from the local police and fire departments.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
3.11.2: Implementation of the proposed project would not result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that would serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments.	No impact	None required	No impact
3.11.3: Implementation of the proposed project may impact water supplies.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.11.4: The proposed project would be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the proposed project's solid waste disposal needs.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.11.5: Implementation of the proposed project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated.	No impact	None required	No impact
3.11.6: Implementation of the proposed project may impact electric power lines on the proposed project site.	Less than significant	None required	Less than significant
3.12. Traffic and Transportation			
3.12.1: Under Existing with Project conditions study area intersections could operation at a deficient LOS.	Potentially significant	<p>3.12.1a: #6. North State Street / Kunzler Ranch Road. There are a number of options that would improve or maintain current levels of peak hour LOS operations at this intersection. The measures or improvements include:</p> <p>Prohibit project haul truck traffic during the PM peak hour. This measure could be implemented as a condition of project approval. Without project truck traffic westbound PM peak hour approach movements would continue to operate as they do currently (LOS E / delay 46.9 seconds per vehicle).</p> <p>Require all outbound haul truck traffic to turn right onto North State Street during the AM and PM peak hours. This measure would require southbound trucks to travel north on North State Street and access the U.S. 101 southbound ramp at Lake Mendocino Drive. This measure also could be implemented as a condition of project approval and would result in LOS E operations at the westbound approach during the PM peak hour. This option (Alternative Route A) is analyzed in Section 3.12 of this report.</p>	Significant and unavoidable

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
		<p>Provide an alternative route for southbound project haul trucks. This option (Alternative Route B) would provide a roadway link from the project site on existing private roads south to the signalized Ford Road / North State Street intersection where project trucks would turn right onto North State Street and access the nearby U.S. 101 southbound ramp. This measure would result in LOS E operations at the westbound approach of North State Street / Kunzler Ranch Road intersection during the PM peak hour. This option would require use agreements between the project sponsors and private property owners. The private roadways would require survey testing and possible upgrading prior to use as haul routes. This option (Alternative Route B) is analyzed in Section 3.12 of this report.</p> <p>Installation of a traffic signal would result in acceptable LOS B or better conditions during the AM and PM peak hour at all approaches of this intersection. A traffic signal at this location would improve safety by insuring that westbound left-turns would receive sufficient green time during a cycle to maneuver from Kunzler Ranch Road to southbound North State Street. As noted, current traffic levels at this intersection do not meet the peak hour volume signal warrant.</p> <p>3.12.1b: #8. North State Street / Northbound U.S. 101 Ramps. The installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would improve overall operations to LOS C or better during the AM and PM peak hours. As under existing conditions the peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this location.</p> <p>The Route 101 Corridor Interchange Study documented a higher than average collision rate at this intersection at the off-ramp, on ramp and freeway mainline in the vicinity of ramp merge. The excess collision rate is due primarily to inadequate merge length and substandard radius at the on-ramp and inadequate merge capacity (on-ramp) and congestion at the intersection. The Route 101 study recommends signalization at both the northbound and southbound ramps in conjunction with optimization and coordination with the North State Street /Kuki Lane signalized intersection to the south to address near-term operational problems.</p> <p>The project sponsor would be required to contribute a fair share toward the implementation of the identified improvements measures where appropriate. The <i>Ukiah Valley Area Transportation Impact Fee Nexus Study</i>, September 2008 (Nexus Study) provides a description of the techniques used to calculate the fee for the Transportation Impact Fee Program (TIFP) capital project list. The TIFP list identifies long range improvement projects for U.S. 101 interchanges in the Ukiah Valley corridor including interchanges at Lake Mendocino Drive, North State Street and SR 222 (Talmage). The Nexus Study provides an overall cost estimate for interchange projects but does not specify proposed improvement measures.</p> <p>The project sponsor would coordinate with the County and Caltrans to determine the timing and contribution to project related improvement measures where needed.</p>	

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
<p>3.12.2: Under the 2015 with Project condition study area intersections could operate at a deficient LOS.</p>	<p>Potentially significant</p>	<p>3.12.2a: #5. North State Street / Hensley Creek Road. The delays at this intersection would primarily be due to traffic generated by the community college exiting at the eastbound approach left-turn movement. Installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would result in PM peak hour LOS B or better operations for both baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>3.12.2b: #6. North State Street / Kunzler Ranch Road. The delays at this intersection would be at the westbound approach left-turn movement during the PM peak hour under conditions without and with project traffic. Other than the installation of a traffic signal the improvement measures described for the Existing with Project scenario at this intersection would not mitigate the LOS F conditions. The previous measures include prohibiting project haul traffic during the PM peak hour or, require all project outbound haul truck traffic to turn right onto North State Street during the PM peak hour (Alternative A) or, provide an alternative route for southbound project haul trucks (Alternative B). While these measures would not restore acceptable PM peak hour LOS operations at the westbound approach, implementation of one or more of these measures would remove westbound and southbound left-turn large haul trucks from the intersection during peak hour conditions. A reduction of heavy truck traffic would contribute to overall safer operations on North Main Street at this intersection.</p> <p>Installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would result in PM peak hour LOS B or better operations for both 2015 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met only under PM peak hour with project conditions at this intersection.</p> <p>3.12.2c: #7. North State Street / Orr Springs Road. The delays at this intersection would primarily be due to traffic at the eastbound approach left-turn movement in the PM peak hour. Installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would result in PM peak hour LOS B or better operations for both 2015 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>3.12.2d: #8. North State Street / Northbound U.S. 101 Ramps. The delays at this intersection would primarily be due to traffic exiting U.S. 101 at the northbound off-ramp (westbound approach) during the PM peak hour. The installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would improve overall operations to LOS C or better during the AM and PM peak hours for both 2015 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>As noted, this intersection experiences a higher than average number of collisions due to inadequate merge lengths and capacities at the on-ramp and congestion at the off-ramp intersection. The near-term improvement of a signal at this intersection would include signalization at the southbound off-ramp and coordination with the</p>	<p>Significant and unavoidable</p>

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
		<p>existing signalized intersection at Kuki Lane/North State Street.</p> <p>3.12.2e: #9. North State Street / Southbound U.S. 101 Ramps. The installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would improve overall operations to LOS D or better during the AM and PM peak hours for both 2015 baseline and with project conditions. The near-term improvements developed for this intersection (Route 101 Corridor Interchange Study) include a signal at the southbound off-ramps that would be coordinated with the existing signal at Kuki Lane. Other near-term improvements include a signal at the northbound ramps and an increased acceleration lane on the U.S. 101 overcrossing.</p> <p>3.12.2f: #12 SR 222 / U.S. 101 Southbound Ramps. The unacceptable delays at this intersection would primarily be due to southbound and northbound approach (off-ramps) right-turn movements during the AM and PM peak hours. The installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would improve overall operations to LOS B or better during the AM and PM peak hours for both 2015 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>Future improvements proposed for this interchange (Route 101 Corridor Interchange Study) include modifications to the current configuration the installation of signals at both northbound and southbound ramp intersections and the optimization and coordination of the existing signal at Airport Park Boulevard with the newly installed ramp signals.</p> <p>3.12.2g: #13 SR 222 / U.S. 101 Northbound Ramps. The northbound approach at this intersection would operate at unacceptable delay levels due to PM peak hour left-turn movements. Installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would improve overall PM peak hour operations to LOS B or better. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this location under PM peak hour conditions.</p> <p>The installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would likely be part of the overall future proposed improvements for the SR 222 interchange as described above (see intersection #12).</p> <p>The project sponsor would be required to contribute a fair share toward the implementation of the identified improvements measures where appropriate. The <i>Ukiah Valley Area Transportation Impact Fee Nexus Study</i>, September 2008 (Nexus Study) provides a description of the techniques used to calculate the fee for the Transportation Impact Fee Program (TIFP) capital project list. The TIFP list identifies long range improvement projects for U.S. 101 interchanges in the Ukiah Valley corridor including interchanges at Lake Mendocino Drive, North State Street and SR 222. The Nexus Study provides an overall cost estimate for interchange projects but does not specify proposed improvement measures.</p> <p>The project sponsor would coordinate with the County and Caltrans to determine the timing and contribution to project related improvement measures.</p>	

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
<p>3.12.3: Under the 2030 with Project condition study area intersections could operate at a deficient LOS.</p>	Potentially significant	<p>3.12.3a: #5. North State Street / Hensley Creek Road. The delays at this intersection would primarily be due to traffic generated by the community college exiting at the eastbound approach left-turn movement. Installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would result in AM and PM peak hour LOS B or better operations for both 2030 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>3.12.3b: #6. North State Street / Kunzler Ranch Road. The delays at this intersection would be at the westbound approach left-turn movement during the AM and PM peak hour under conditions without and with project traffic. Installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would result in AM and PM peak hour LOS B or better operations for both 2030 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>The previous measures recommending prohibiting project haul traffic during the peak hours or, requiring all project outbound haul truck traffic to turn right onto North State Street during the peak hours (Alternative A) or, providing an alternative route for southbound project haul trucks (Alternative B) would contribute to safe operations at this intersection. While these measures would not restore acceptable peak hour LOS operations at the westbound approach, implementation of one or more of these measures would remove westbound and southbound left-turn large haul trucks from the intersection during peak hour conditions. A reduction of heavy truck traffic would contribute to overall safer operations on North Main Street at this intersection.</p> <p>Installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would result in peak hour LOS B or better operations during the AM and PM peak hour for both 2030 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>Measure 3.12.3c: #7. North State Street / Orr Springs Road. The delays at this intersection would primarily be due to traffic at the eastbound approach left-turn movement in the PM peak hour. Installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would result in PM peak hour LOS D or better operations for both 2030 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>The distance between this intersection and Kunzler Ranch Road / North State Street to the north is approximately 500 feet. The relatively close proximity of these two signals would require that they are coordinated so that queuing traffic has sufficient time to clear and avoid operational problems between the two intersections.</p> <p>3.12.3d: #8. North State Street / Northbound U.S. 101 Ramps. The delays at this intersection would be primarily due to traffic exiting U.S. 101 at the northbound off-ramp (westbound approach) during the AM and PM peak hours. The installation of a</p>	Significant and unavoidable

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
		<p>traffic signal at this intersection would improve overall operations to LOS B or better during the AM and PM peak hours for both 2030 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>The proposed future improvements at this intersection would include a coordinated signal, increases in acceleration length for on-ramps and mainline merges. These improvements would be implemented in conjunction to improvements to the southbound interchange intersection.</p> <p>3.12.3e: #9. North State Street / Southbound U.S. 101 Ramps. Proposed future improvements (Route 101 Corridor Interchange Study) at this intersection would include a realignment of the on and off-ramps to form a signalized four legged intersection. This newly configured intersection would be coordinated with the signalized intersection at North State Street / Kuki Lane. The implementation of the proposed measures would improve overall operations to LOS D or better during the AM and PM peak hours for both 2030 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>3.12.3f: #12 SR 222 / U.S. 101 Southbound Ramps. The unacceptable delays at this intersection would primarily be due to southbound and northbound approach (off-ramps) right-turn movements during the AM and PM peak hours. The installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would improve overall operations to LOS C or better during the AM and PM peak hours for both 2030 baseline and with project conditions. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>The proposed future improvements at this intersection would include a reconfiguring of the current interchange design and a signal at the northbound ramps. The interchange signals would be coordinated with the existing signal at Airport Park Boulevard / Talmage Road.</p> <p>3.12.3g: #13 SR 222 / U.S. 101 Northbound Ramps. The northbound approach at this intersection would operate at unacceptable delay levels due to peak hour left-turn movements. Installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would improve overall peak hour operations to LOS C or better. The peak hour traffic volume signal warrant would be met at this intersection.</p> <p>As noted (see intersection #12 above), the installation of a traffic signal at this intersection would be part of a comprehensive future improvement plan for this interchange.</p> <p>The project sponsor would be required to contribute a fair share toward the implementation of the identified improvements measures where appropriate. The <i>Ukiah Valley Area Transportation Impact Fee Nexus Study</i>, September 2008 (Nexus</p>	

**TABLE ES-1
SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES**

Environmental Impact	Level of Significance before Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Level of Significance after Mitigation
<p>3.12.4: Project operation would contribute to the degradation of pavement on public roads.</p>	<p>Potentially significant</p>	<p>Study) provides a description of the techniques used to calculate the fee for the Transportation Impact Fee Program (TIFP) capital project list. The TIFP list identifies long range improvement projects for U.S. 101 interchanges in the Ukiah Valley corridor including interchanges at Lake Mendocino Drive, North State Street and SR 222. The Nexus Study provides an overall cost estimate for interchange projects but does not specify proposed improvement measures.</p> <p>The project sponsor would coordinate with the County and Caltrans to determine the timing and contribution to project related improvement measures.</p> <p>3.12.4. The applicant shall improve Kunzler Ranch Road as needed (e.g., overlays or reconstruction) per the April 28, 2009 Kunzler Ranch Road study and the Caltrans Design Manual standards.</p> <p>Prior to operations the project applicant shall enter into a <i>Roadway Maintenance Agreement</i> with Mendocino County providing their proportionate share of the responsibility to maintain the proposed haul roads.</p>	<p>Less than significant</p>

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

1.1 Purpose of this Environmental Impact Report

Mendocino County, as the Lead Agency, has prepared this Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) to provide the public and responsible and trustee agencies with information about the potential environmental effects of the proposed Kunzler Terrace Mine Project (generally referred to in this DEIR as the “proposed project”).

This DEIR was prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and the CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations, Title 14). As described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15121(a), an EIR is a public informational document that assesses the potential environmental impacts of a proposed project and identifies mitigation measures and alternatives to the proposed project that could minimize or avoid adverse environmental impacts. CEQA requires that state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority. The EIR is an informational document used in the planning and decision-making process. It is not the purpose or intent of an EIR to recommend either approval or denial of a project.

CEQA requires that a lead agency neither approve nor carry out a project as proposed unless the significant environmental effects have been reduced to an “acceptable level,” or unless specific findings are made attesting to the infeasibility of altering the project to reduce or avoid adverse environmental impacts (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15091 and 15092). An “acceptable level” is defined as eliminating, avoiding, or substantially lessening the significant effects. CEQA also requires that decision-makers balance the benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks. If environmental impacts are identified as significant and unavoidable, the project may still be approved if it is demonstrated that social, economic, or other benefits outweigh the unavoidable impacts. The lead agency would then be required to state in writing the specific reasons for approving the project based on information presented in the EIR, as well as other information in the record. This process is defined as a “Statement of Overriding Considerations” by CEQA Guidelines Section 15093.

1.2 Project Overview

Granite Construction Company (Granite) has applied for a conditional use permit (CUP) with the Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services. The CUP would provide for the development of a new off-channel sand and gravel mine and processing operation, and reclamation of the project site to open space after mining activities are completed. Granite is also seeking approval of a reclamation plan and financial assurances for the project site.

The proposed operation (project) consists of sand and gravel extraction. Mining sand and gravel resources requires loosening the rock and crushing it into a manageable size for transport to production facilities. Mining activities would take place over a period of approximately 20 years, with and additional 5 years to complete reclamation, for a total project life of approximately 25 years.

1.3 Type of Environmental Impact Report

The CEQA Guidelines identify several types of EIRs, each applicable to different project circumstances. This EIR is prepared as a project-level EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15161. The scope of this project-level EIR has been focused to only address issues identified by Mendocino County to pose a potentially significant effect on the environment. This type of EIR focuses primarily on the changes in the environment that would occur as a result of project development, and examines all phases of a particular project (i.e., planning, construction, operation). Ultimately, the EIR will be used by Mendocino County as a tool to evaluate the proposed project's environmental impacts and can be further used to modify, approve, or deny approval of the proposed project based on the analyses provided in the EIR.

1.4 Range of Alternatives

CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a) requires that a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any significant effects of the project, be discussed in an EIR. This EIR identifies and analyzes such a range of alternatives, discusses the environmental effects of each alternative, compares the environmental effects of each alternative with existing conditions and with impacts of the proposed project, and addresses the relationship of each alternative to the project objectives. The determinations of Mendocino County concerning the feasibility, acceptance, or rejection of the alternatives considered in this EIR will be addressed and resolved in the County's findings, as required by CEQA. The alternatives consist of the following:

- Alternative 1 – “No Project” Alternative
- Alternative 2 – Off-Site Alternative
- Alternative 3 – On-Site Alternative

For a discussion of the components, bases for selection, and impacts of these alternatives, see Chapter 4, “Alternatives.”

1.5 Use of this Environmental Impact Report

Mendocino County has directed the preparation of this EIR, to be used in conjunction with other information in the formal record, to act on the proposed Kunzler Terrace Mine project proposal. In accordance with CEQA requirements, the County will determine the adequacy of the Final EIR and, if adequate, will certify the document.

This EIR provides environmental information and evaluation which other responsible and trustee agencies may rely on to make informed decisions over issuance of specific permits related to the proposed project. In addition to County permits and approvals, permits and approvals may be necessary from agencies identified in Chapter 2, “Project Description.”

1.6 CEQA Environmental Impact Report Process

1.6.1 Notice of Preparation

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the County circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this EIR on October 27, 2008, for a 30-day public review period that concluded on November 26, 2008. The NOP was circulated to the public, interested parties, and local, state, and federal agencies. Its purpose was to inform the interested parties that the proposed project could have significant effects on the environment and to solicit their comments. The NOP is included as Appendix A of the EIR.

A scoping meeting was held on November 5, 2008. No comment letters were received from the public or local and state agencies during the NOP comment period.

1.6.2 Draft Environmental Impact Report

This document constitutes the DEIR. The DEIR contains a description of the project, description of the environmental setting, identification of project impacts, and mitigation measures for impacts found to be significant, as well as an analysis of project alternatives.

1.6.3 Final EIR and EIR Certification

Written comments received in response to the DEIR will be addressed in a Response to Comments addendum document which, together with the revised DEIR text, will constitute the Final EIR. After review of the project and the DEIR, the Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services, at a public hearing, will recommend to the County Planning Commission whether to approve or deny the proposed project. The County Planning Commission will then review the project, the Final EIR, the Department of Planning and Building Services recommendations, and public testimony, and consider certification of the EIR and approval or denial of the project.

1.6.4 Mitigation Monitoring and Report Program

Section 21081.6 of the CEQA Guidelines requires lead agencies to “adopt a reporting and mitigation monitoring program for the changes to the project which it has adopted or made conditions of project approval in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.” Any mitigation measures adopted by the County as conditions of approval for the project will be included in a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) to verify compliance. The mitigation

measures presented in this EIR have been clearly identified and presented in language that will facilitate establishment of an adequate MMRP. The MMRP will be included in the Final EIR, and will be available prior to the certification of the Final EIR.

1.7 Public Participation

The CEQA Statutes and Guidelines and Mendocino County encourage public participation in the planning and environmental review processes. As mentioned above, an NOP for the project was released on October 27, 2008 for a 30-day public review period which concluded on November 26, 2008 (included as Appendix A of this DEIR). Mendocino County received no comment letters during the NOP comment period. A public scoping meeting was held at the County of Mendocino Administrative Complex on November 5, 2008. Environmental issues raised during the scoping process were considered in the preparation of the DEIR.

The public will have an opportunity to provide comments regarding the adequacy of the DEIR during a public review and comment period. In addition, one or more public hearings may be held by the Mendocino County Planning Commission to receive comments. Written public comments may be submitted to the County at any time during the public review and comment period, September 23, 2009 through November 6, 2009. Comments on this EIR can be submitted in writing to:

The Department of Planning and Building Services
Attn: John Speka
501 Low Gap Road, Room 1440
Ukiah, CA 95482

Comments can also be submitted via electronic mail at spekaj@co.mendocino.ca.us.

1.8 Organization of this Environmental Impact Report

This DEIR is organized into the following sections:

- **Executive Summary:** The executive summary includes a brief summary of the proposed project, describes each significant impact with proposed mitigation measures and alternatives, discusses areas of controversy known to the Lead Agency and issues to be resolved.
- **Chapter 1, Introduction:** Provides an overview of the document and its organization, describes the purpose of the DEIR, and summarizes the DEIR review and certification process.
- **Chapter 2, Project Description:** Provides a description of the project site and its location, the project goals and objectives, the project setting, the project components, and a list of the necessary permits and approvals (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15124).
- **Chapter 3, Environmental Setting, Impacts, and Mitigation Measures:** Describes the existing setting, discusses the environmental impacts of the project, and identifies mitigation measures for the environmental impacts examined in this DEIR (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15125 and 15126). The issue areas addressed in the EIR are aesthetics, agricultural resources, air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, geology, hazardous materials, hydrology, land use, noise, public services and utilities, and traffic.

- **Chapter 4, Alternatives Analysis:** Presents an analysis of a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project, presents the environmental impacts associated with each alternative, and compares the relative impacts of each alternative to those of the proposed project (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Sections 15126(f) and 15126.6).
- **Chapter 5, Other CEQA Considerations:** Presents discussions of growth inducing effects (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(d), cumulative impacts (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15130), and significant unavoidable impacts.
- **Chapter 6, Report Preparation and Public Participation:** Lists report preparers and identifies persons and organizations consulted during report preparation (pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15129).
- **Chapter 7, Glossary and Acronyms:** Defines terms and acronyms used in this DEIR.
- **Chapter 8, References:** Provides a list of reference materials and persons consulted during the preparation of the EIR.
- **Appendices:** The appendices are located in Volume II and are referenced in the Table of Contents.

1.9 SMARA/Financial Assurances

The Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) was enacted by the state legislature in 1975 and is the state's response to the need for a continuing supply of mineral resources while preventing damage from mining activities to public health, property, and the environment. SMARA requires the preparation of a reclamation plan, annual mine inspections, and the maintenance of a financial assurances plan and funding for post-mining reclamation, if needed.

The Department of Conservation, Office of Mine Reclamation (DOC-OMR) and the State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB) are jointly charged with ensuring proper administration of the SMARA requirements. The SMGB promulgates regulations to clarify and interpret the SMARA provisions, and also serves as a policy and appeals board. The OMR provides ongoing technical assistance for lead agencies and operators, maintains a database of mine locations and operational information statewide, and is responsible for compliance related matters.

Mendocino County has lead agency status under CEQA and SMARA. It is anticipated that the SMGB will use this EIR as a responsible agency in reviewing the mine reclamation plan.

1.9.1 Financial Assurances

SMARA requires surface mining operations to obtain lead agency (Mendocino County) approved financial assurance for the reclamation of mined lands, so the public will not bear the cost of reclaiming abandoned operations. Financial assurances may take the form of surety bonds, irrevocable letters of credit, or trust funds, and must be accessible by the lead agency or the state in cases of mine abandonment. In the event of financial incapability by the operator, the financial assurance funds would be used by the lead agency (or SMGB) to reclaim the mined site.

The applicant will prepare a cost estimate covering the costs of reclaiming the site and will provide the SMGB with an appropriate financial assurance mechanism for the projected cost of reclamation.

SMARA regulations require the following in the calculation of financial assurance:

- An analysis of the activities necessary to implement the approved reclamation plan
- The unit costs for each activity
- The number of units
- Contingency costs and administrative costs

Financial assurances are reviewed annually by the lead agency and adjusted, if necessary, to reflect changes in the cost of reclamation activities, lands reclaimed the previous year, and the lands to be disturbed the next year.