



NOTICE OF PREPARATION

FROM: San Bernardino County Land Use Services Department
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue, First Floor, San Bernardino, CA 92415-0182

TO: Interested Agencies, Organizations, and Individuals

SUBJECT: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

The County of San Bernardino (County) will be the lead agency pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the White Knob/White Ridge Limestone Quarries Expansion Project (proposed project). A summary of the project description and location is provided below. A more detailed project description and location as well as a preliminary analysis of the proposed project's environmental effects are provided in the attached Initial Study.

Project Title: White Knob/White Ridge Limestone Quarries Expansion Project (proposed project)

Project Applicant: Omya California, a division of Omya Inc.

Project Location: The White Knob/White Ridge Limestone Quarries are located in the San Bernardino Mountains in southwestern San Bernardino County approximately 6 miles southwest of the community of Lucerne Valley and 8 miles northwest of Big Bear Lake just north of the San Bernardino National Forest. The project site consists of a 475.1-acre area including 335.1 acres of existing or planned surface mining operation-related disturbance and approximately 40 acres of existing BLM haul road right-of-way on federal public land. The project site location is shown on **Figures 1** and **2** of the attached Initial Study.

Project Description: Omya California (Omya) has submitted the following:

- A Mining and Land Reclamation Plan Conditional Use Permit application submitted to the County of San Bernardino
- An Amended Mine and Reclamation Plan (Amended Plan) submitted to the County of San Bernardino and the California Office of Mine Reclamation

Combined, these applications propose the expansion of the existing White Knob/White Ridge Limestone Quarries, a limestone mining operation. The Amended Plan includes expansion of the existing quarries' operation (White Knob Quarry, White Ridge Quarry, and White Knob Annex Quarry) and the existing Overburden (OB) site, the creation of two new OB sites, and the expansion of the ancillary disturbance areas, which include haul and access roads, sediment basins and other erosion control features, storage pads, crusher location, west slope impacts, and incidental impacts from boulder roll-down. In addition, the proposed project would increase operational years of the quarries by 24 years from the existing permit expiration date of 2031 to the year 2055. The total existing permitted operational area is approximately 145 acres. The Amended Plan would add approximately 190.1 acres, for a total permitted operational area of approximately 335.1 acres. The amendment does not propose any new quarries.

The complete proposed Amended Mine and Reclamation Plan is available for review on the County's website: <http://cms.sbcounty.gov/lus/Planning/Environmental/NoticesDeterminations/Mountain.aspx>

Questions about the County's review of the proposed project and approval processes may be directed to:

Channary Leng
Consultant to:
San Bernardino County
Land Use Services Department
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue
San Bernardino, CA 92415
(949) 450-0171, ext. 314
E-mail: channary@rgpcorp.com

Signature:  _____ Date: 6/10/2013 _____
Channary Leng, Consultant to San Bernardino County

Introduction

This Notice of Preparation provides a description of the proposed project and solicits comments on the scope and content of the environmental document being prepared to analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed project. Comments are hereby solicited from federal, state, and local agencies and from the general public. Comments received in response to this NOP will be reviewed and considered in determining the scope of the EIR. The County requests that agency comments regarding the scope and content of the environmental document also be pertinent to that agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Where applicable, it is recommended that agencies make use of the EIR prepared by the County when considering its permitting or other approvals related to the proposed project.

Commenters are asked to include their name, telephone number, address, and e-mail address (if applicable) in the event it is necessary to further clarify the comments offered. Agencies submitting comments are asked to provide the name, telephone number, and e-mail address of the agency's contact person. Please write "*Omya White Knob/White Ridge Limestone Quarries Project*" in the subject line. Due to CEQA-defined time limits, comments should be sent at the earliest possible date, but no later than July 12, 2013. Please direct comments and questions related to the EIR to:

Pat Angell
PMC
2729 Prospect Park Drive, Suite 220
Rancho Cordova, CA 95670
Phone: (916) 231-3373
Fax: (916) 361-1574
E-mail: pangell@pmcworld.com

Project Description

Please see the attached Initial Study.

Government Agency Reviews and Permits

The County will be the CEQA lead agency and will consider the Amended Mine and Reclamation Plan based upon the environmental analysis disclosed in the EIR. The applicant's requested public agency actions include:

- County of San Bernardino approval of a Mining and Land Reclamation Plan Conditional Use Permit Application
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Section 7 Consultation with the Forest Service through the Carbonate Habitat Management Strategy Plan
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – Section 404 permitting
- Office of Mine Reclamation – Approval of Amended Mine and Reclamation Plan
- Regional Water Quality Control Board – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife – Streambed Alteration Agreement
- Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District – Air Quality Permitting

Potential Environmental Impacts

The lead agency has determined that the proposed project could result in significant environmental impacts and/or have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment. As such, preparation of an EIR is appropriate. The EIR will evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed project, after having first established the environmental setting, or baseline, for the environmental analysis. In the Initial Study prepared for the proposed project, the following potentially significant impacts were identified for further evaluation, the results of which will be disclosed in the EIR. In each instance, the significance of potential project impacts, cumulative impacts, and appropriate mitigation measures will be disclosed in the EIR.

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cumulative Impacts
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Utilities and Service Systems

In addition, the EIR will discuss the following area even though the Initial Study concluded that there would be no impact or a less than significant impact associated with it:

- Cultural Resources

Attachments

Initial Study for the White Knob/White Ridge Limestone Quarries Expansion Project

The complete proposed Amended Mine and Reclamation Plan is available on the County's website:
<http://cms.sbcounty.gov/lus/Planning/Environmental/NoticesDeterminations/Mountain.aspx>

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY INITIAL STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST FORM

This form and the descriptive information in the application package constitute the contents of the Initial Study pursuant to County Guidelines under Ordinance 3040 and Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

PROJECT LABEL

APN: 446-011-04, 446-011-06, 446-021-11, and 446-021-35	
Applicant: Omya California, a Division of Omya Inc. 7225 Crystal Creek Road Lucerne Valley, CA 92356	USGS Quad: Butler Peak/Fifteen Mile Valley, California
Community: Lucerne Valley	T, R, Section: T3N R1W, Secs. 5, 6, 7 & 8
Location: 6 miles south of Highway 18 and 5 miles west of Crystal Creek Road	Thomas Bros.: 2005, p. 4660
Project No: AP 20080046	Planning Area: Lucerne Valley
Staff: Channary Leng	
Rep: Lilburn Corporation	LUSD: RC (Resource Conservation)
Proposal: Revision to Mining CUP and amendment to Mine and Reclamation Plan on a total of 375.1 acres for the White Knob/White Ridge Limestone Quarries	Overlays: BR (Biotic Resources) FS-1 (Fire Safety Overlay) AR-4 (Airport Safety Overlay) GH (Geologic Hazard Overlay – Earthquake Fault Zone)

PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

Lead agency: County of San Bernardino
Land Use Services Department
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0184

Contact person: Channary Leng
Phone No: (949) 450-0171 **Fax No:** (949) 450-0182

E-mail: channary@rgpcorp.com

Project sponsor: Omya California, a Division of Omya Inc.
7225 Crystal Creek Road
Lucerne Valley, CA 92356

Preparer: PMC

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Omya California (Omya), a Division of Omya Inc., is proposing an Amended Mine and Reclamation Plan (Amended Plan) for the proposed expansion of the existing White Knob/White Ridge Limestone Quarries. Omya has submitted the Amended Plan to the County of San Bernardino (County) for review and approval.

The project site is located approximately 6 miles southwest of the community of Lucerne Valley and 8 miles northwest of Big Bear Lake just north of the San Bernardino National Forest (SBNF) in San Bernardino County, California (see **Figure 1** and **Figure 2**). The project site is within portions of Sections 5, 6, 7, and 8 of Township 3 North, Range 1 West, SBBM. The project site encompasses approximately 375.1 acres including the existing 145-acre permitted operational area, a 190.1-acre expansion area, and a 40-acre Bureau of Land Management (BLM) haul road right-of-way.

The Amended Plan (see **Figure 3** and **Figure 4**) incorporates supplemental data and modifications to mining and reclamation plans in order to expand operations at the quarries. The Amended Plan includes expansion of the existing quarries' operation (White Knob Quarry, White Ridge Quarry, and White Knob Annex Quarry) and the existing overburden (OB) site, the creation of two new OB sites, and the expansion of the ancillary disturbance limits, which include haul and access roads, sediment basins and other erosion control features, storage pads, crusher location, west slope impacts, and incidental impacts from boulder roll-down. In addition, the proposed project would increase operational years of the quarries by 24 years from the existing permit expiration date of 2031 to the year 2055. The total existing permitted operational area is approximately 145 acres. The Amended Plan would add approximately 190.1 acres, for a total permitted operational area of approximately 335.1 acres. The amendment does not propose any new quarries.

With the exception of the haul road right-of-way, the project site is located entirely within approximately 776.1 acres of patented fee lands, portions of which are leased or owned by Omya. The haul road is located on federal public land within a Bureau of Land Management right-of-way. Note: Approximately 70 acres of an unpatented mining claim on BLM-managed federal lands are in the process of being transferred to Omya ownership through a direct land sale. The Amended Plan and the EIR assume that this area is owned by Omya and is included as part of the project site.

Permitting of the proposed project would require compliance with the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA), implemented by the County (Development Code, Chapter 88.03). Therefore, in consultation with the County, Omya submitted an Amended Mine and Reclamation Plan per the County's Mine and Reclamation Plan Conditional Use Permit Application, Information Sheet, and Application. Both of these forms and applications are combined in the Amended Plan with four attached 30-inch by 40-inch, 200-scale mine and reclamation plan sheets and cross sections on file with the San Bernardino County Land Use Services Department. In addition, a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) application was submitted to the County.

Obtaining the necessary County approvals would require compliance with the California Environmental Impact Report (CEQA). An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be prepared to comply with CEQA.

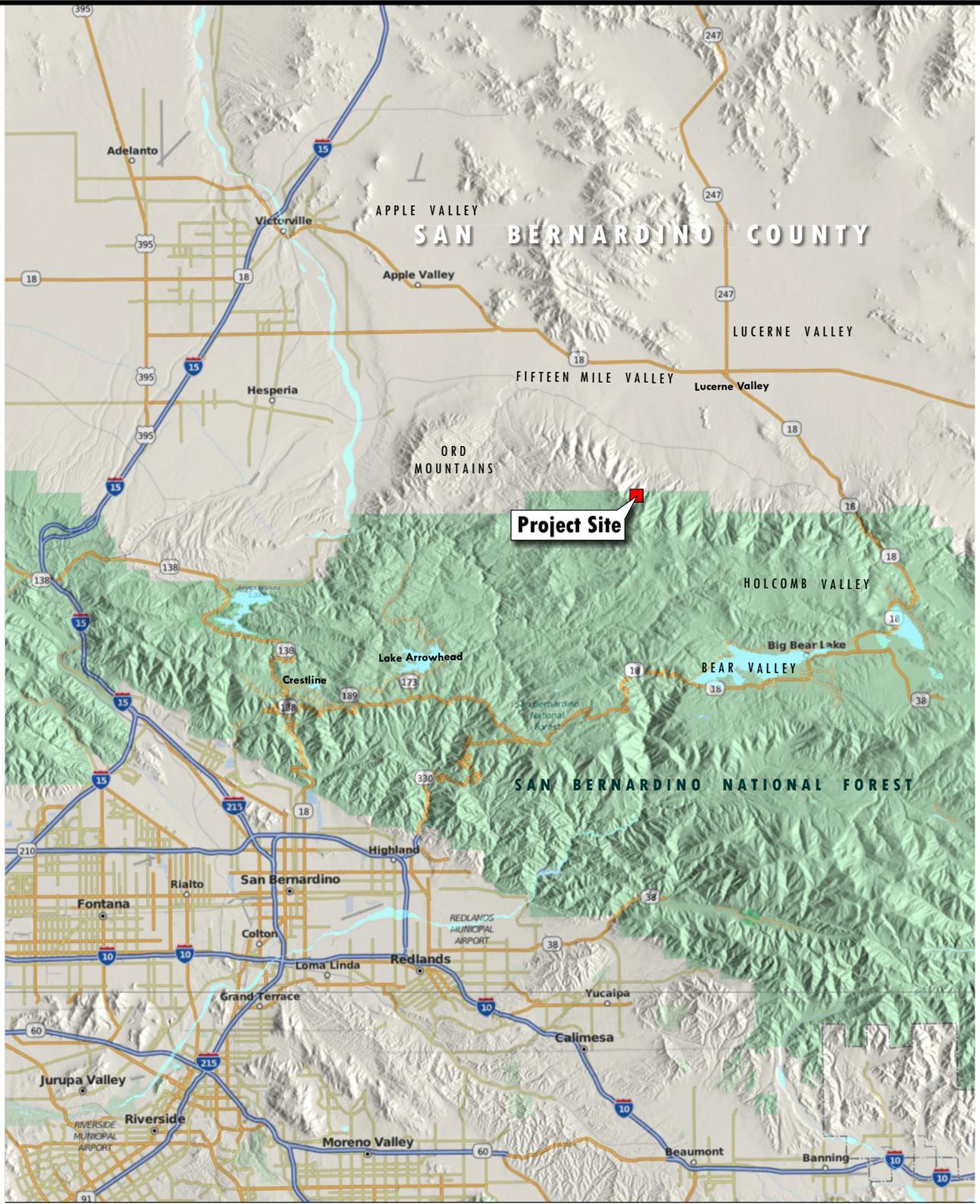
Existing Approved Mine and Reclamation Plan

The San Bernardino County Planning Commission approved the existing White Knob/White Ridge Limestone Mine Site Approval and Reclamation Plan in 1986 (RP# 86M-04) with an expiration date of December 31, 2031. The site is designated as CA Mine ID# 91-36-0067. In addition, the Planning Commission certified the project EIR in 1986 with mitigation measures and adopted a Statement of Overriding Considerations for significant impacts in the following three areas:

1. The direct loss of rare plants and plant habitats.
2. Visual impacts from some areas in Lucerne Valley and dust generation from the preferred crusher site.
3. Visual disruption of the White Mountain viewshed from some vantage points in Lucerne Valley.

The haul road to the White Knob/White Ridge Quarries from the processing plant is approximately 5.1 miles long, going westerly from the processing plant for approximately 3.5 miles then turning southerly to climb at a 14 percent grade up to the quarry sites (see **Figure 2**). The first 4.4 miles of the haul road cross land managed by the BLM. Use and occupation of the haul road on 67 acres was authorized under a Federal Land Policy Management Act (FLPMA) right-of-way (CACA 16644) approved by the BLM Barstow Resource Office in July 1988.

On April 20, 2011, a Settlement Agreement (Agreement) was entered into by and between the BLM, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and Omya relating to activities at the White Knob Quarry. There are six separate components (Parts A through F) in the Agreement. Part B of the Agreement is entitled "Repair, Remediate, and Monitor Improvements to the White Knob Quarry Right-of-Way Access Road and Associated Facilities to Protect Drainages."



Project Site

LEGEND

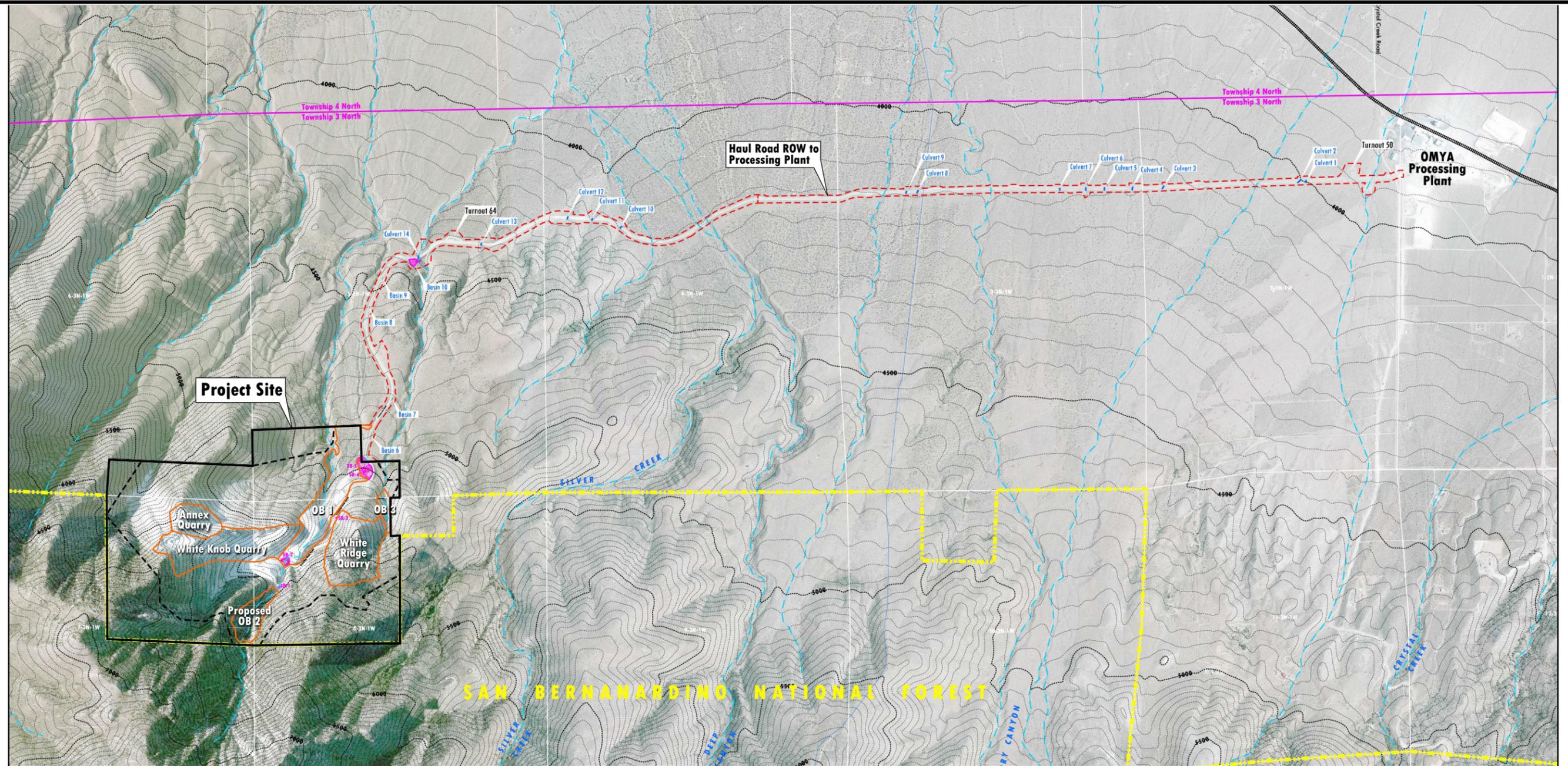
- **Project Site Location (Geographic Location)**
California Zone 5 (FIPS 405): 6859727.90 1956210.48
Lat/Lon: 34° 21' 49.3863" N, 117° 00' 44.3577" W

Source: Lilburn Corporation



Figure 1
Regional Location





LEGEND

- Project Boundary Private Lands
- Limits of Planned Disturbance
- Major Facilities
- Haul Road Right-of-way on BLM Land CACA 16644
- OB** Overburden Stockpile
- SB** Sediment Basin
- Proposed / Improved SB
- Existing Major Contour
- Existing Minor Contour
- Existing Drainages
- San Bernardino National Forest Boundary

Source: Liburn Corporation

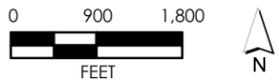
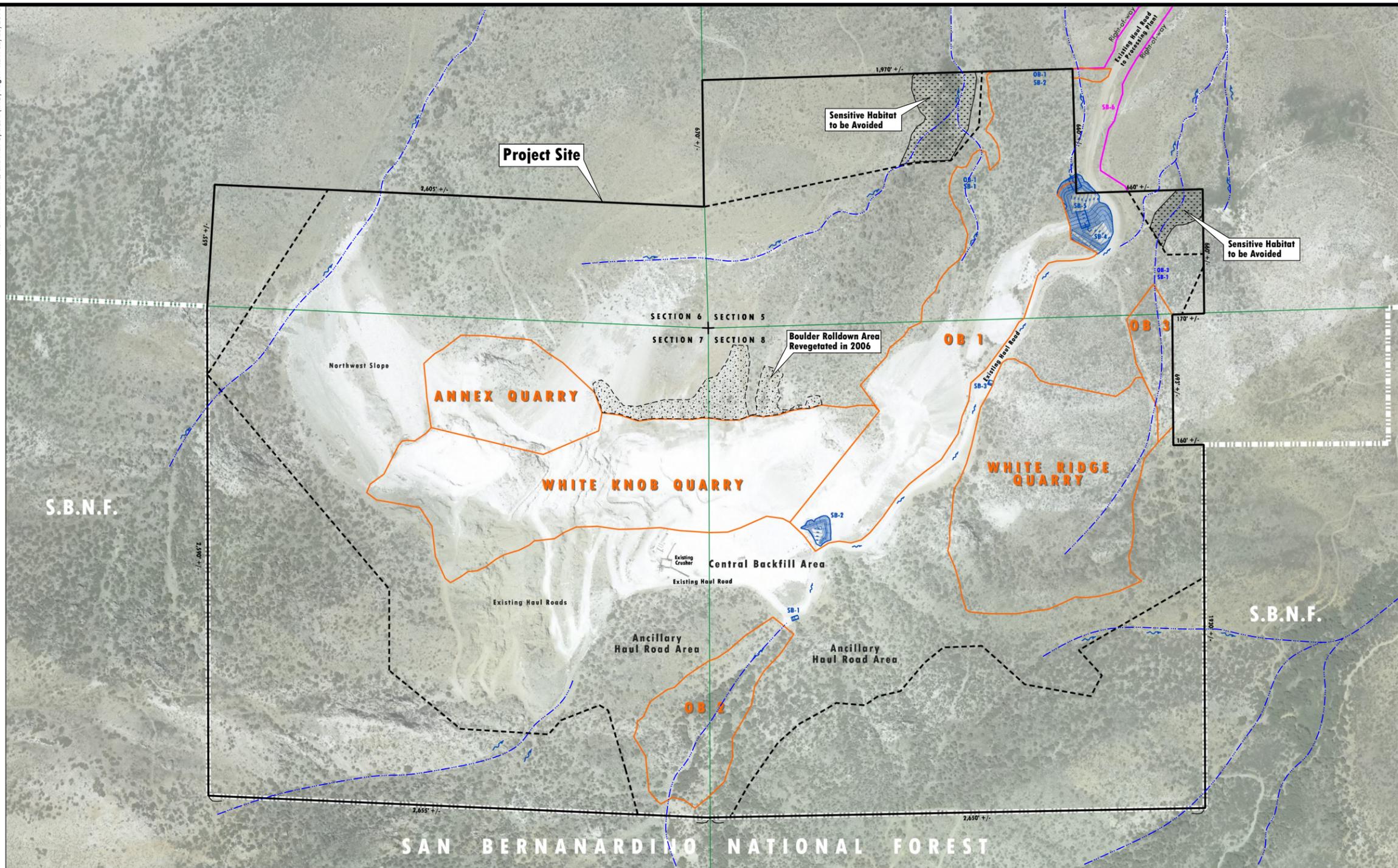


Figure 2
Project Vicinity
PMC



LEGEND

	Project Boundary Private Lands		Overburden Stockpile
	Limits of Planned Disturbance		Sediment Basin
	Major Facilities		Proposed / Improved SB
	Haul Road Right-of-way on BLM Land CACA 16644		Existing Drainages

Source: Lilburn Corporation

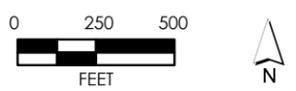
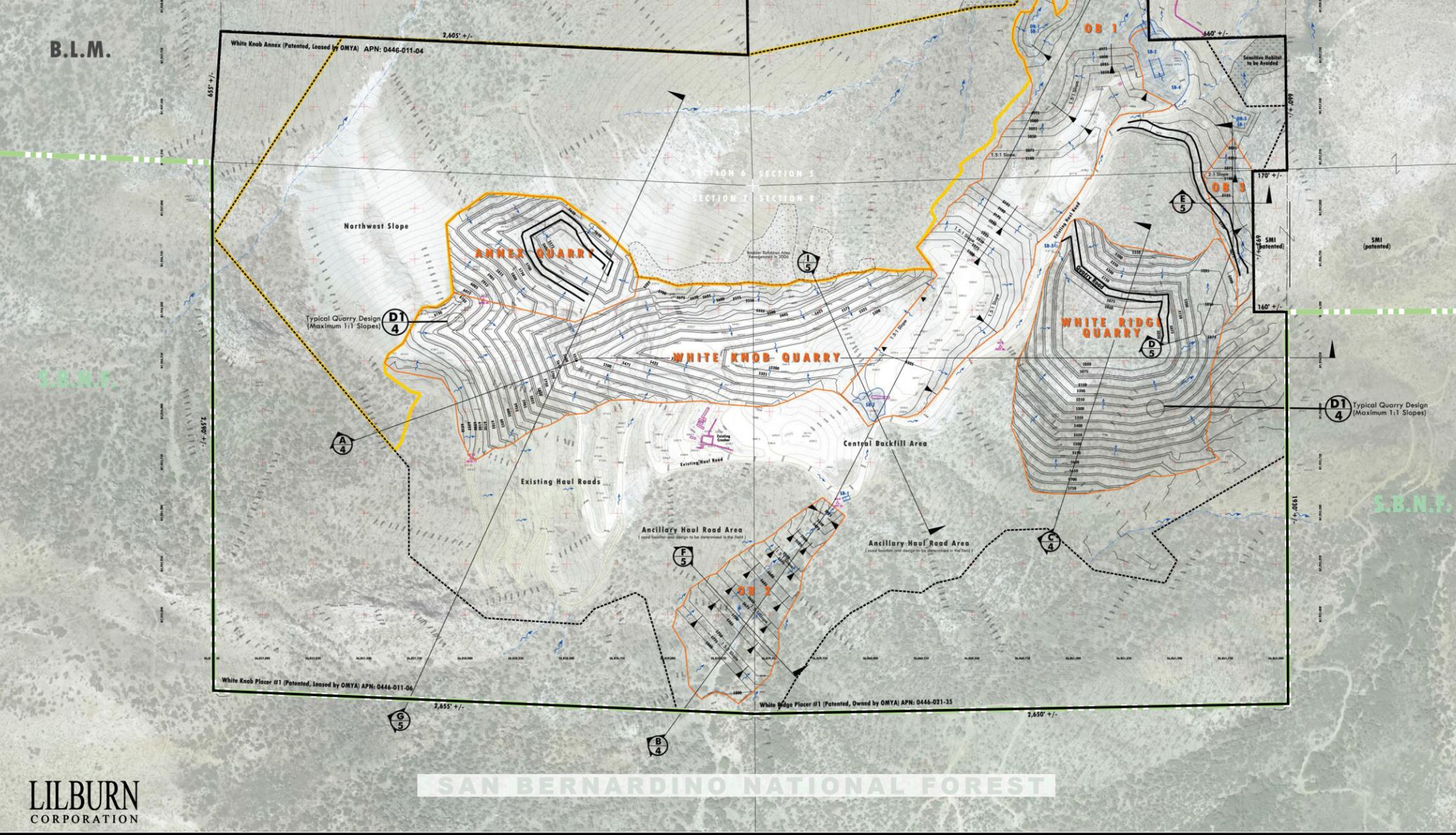


Figure 3
Existing Quarries and Planned Operations
PMC

Mine Plan Notes

1. Name: White Knob - White Ridge Quarries
2. Mineral Mined: Limestone
3. Mine Operation:
 - Omnia California
 - 7225 Crystal Creek Road
 - Luoma Valley, CA 92356
 - Phone: Subcontracted, Plant Manager (760) 248-5233
4. Land Owner:
 - Omnia Inc.
 - 7225 Crystal Creek Road
 - Luoma Valley, CA 92356
 - Phone: Subcontracted, Plant Manager (760) 248-5233
5. Applicant: Same as (3) Omnia California
6. Representative:
 - Lilburn Corporation
 - 1902 Business Center Drive
 - San Bernardino, CA 92408
 - (909) 890-1818
7. Owner of Mineral Rights:

CLAIM NAME	ACREAGE LEASED OR OWNED BY OMYA & APN	LEGAL DESCRIPTION AND CASCP	NAME AND ADDRESS
White Ridge Placer #1	112.2 acres APN 0446-021-35	SW1/4 Sec 6, T2N, R1W, S8M Placer	Owned by Omnia Inc. 7225 Crystal Creek Road Luoma Valley, CA
White Knob Placer #1	180 acres APN 0446-011-08	NE1/4 Sec 7, T3N, R1W, S20M Placer	Leased from Don File P.O. Box 1034 Luoma, CA 92381
White Knob Annex Placer Claim	40 acres APN 0446-011-04	SE 1/4 Sec 6, S1/2, T1/2, R1W, S8M Placer	Leased from Don File P.O. Box 1034 Luoma, CA 92381
Silver Creek Placer #4	70 acres APN 0446-021-11	SW 1/4 Sec 5, S1/2, T3N, R1W land sale with BLM	Owned by Omnia Inc. 7225 Crystal Creek Road Luoma Valley, CA 92356
8. Geologists:
 - CHI Consulting
 - 1352 E. Colton Drive, Suite C
 - Colton, CA 92324
 - (909) 824-7311
9. Map Preparer:
 - Omnia California
 - Lilburn Corporation
10. Source of Existing Topography: Digital Mapping, Inc. & Aerial, 2009
11. Date of Map Preparation: January 2013
12. Assessor's Parcel Numbers: See No. 7 above.
13. Utilities:
 - Electricity: Onsite generated as needed
 - Gas: Not applicable
 - Water: Omnia well system
 - Sewer: Portable sanitation stations
 - Telephone: Verizon
14. Area To Be Disturbed: 190.1 acres per this Amendment
 Area To Be Reclaimed: 335.1 acres total with this Amendment and prior 1986 approval
 BLM ROW - half road width or approx. 40 acres
15. Reclaimed End Uses: Open space habitat for native wildlife and plants
16. County Land Use District: Resource Conservation (RC)
17. Plant and Tree Protection:
 - No protected or endangered trees exist onsite. Specific plant and tree species including Joshua tree, Mojave shrubs, piñon pine, juniper, and canyon live oak will be managed per County Native Plant Protection policy.
18. Previously Mitigated / Incidental Disturbance Area defined on the map includes:
 - Existing disturbance previously mitigated through either reclamation or the April 2011 Settlement Agreement. Previously mitigated disturbance areas are apparent on the photograph base map for District 2.



LEGEND

- Amended Project Boundary
- Private Land
- Limits of Planned Disturbance
- Major Facilities
- Previously Mitigated April 2011 Incidental Disturbance Area
- OB** Overburden
- SB** Sediment Basin
- Proposed/improved SB
- Operating Major Contour
- Operating Minor Contour
- Haul Road
- Slope Indicator
- Top of slope
- Toe of slope
- Design Drainage
- Existing Major Contour
- Existing Minor Contour
- Existing Drainages
- San Bernardino National Forest Boundary
- Sensitive Habitat to be Avoided
- USGS Survey Section
- Claim / Parcel Line

NOTE:
This is a reduced 200 scale sheet. To review details, see attached Sheet 2 in Mine and Reclamation Plan.

LILBURN CORPORATION

Source: Lilburn Corporation



Figure 4
Amended Mine Plan
PMC

In August 2011, Stantec Consulting Inc. (Stantec) prepared the *White Knob Quarry Haul Road Drainage Report and Plan of Development* to analyze the existing drainage conditions at the quarries and along the haul road, and to provide recommendations for facilities to control stormwater and sediment runoff and provide protection to surrounding drainages. Omya subsequently submitted an amended right-of-way application to the BLM to make improvements to the haul road and drainages as recommended in the Stantec Plan of Development. In order to accommodate the improvements required to adequately repair and remediate the right-of-way access road and drainage facilities, the existing right-of-way would be extended from the existing 67 acres to 83.5 acres.

The components (Parts A through F) of the Agreement consist of the following:

- Part A – Omya has agreed to study and monitor Ruby Springs, located to the north of the White Knob quarry area. Ongoing monitoring through 2014 is being undertaken and reported to the BLM.
- Part B – As discussed previously, requires Omya to repair, remediate, and monitor measures to control runoff and sedimentation along the 4.4 miles of haul road on BLM-managed land.
- Part C – Requires that the former explosives storage facility located on BLM land be removed and reclaimed. The facility has been removed. The area is part of the 70-acre area purchased by Omya, and its future use and reclamation are part of the Amended Plan.
- Part D – Requires haul road improvements and reclamation to be incorporated into the overall reclamation plan.
- Part E – Requires Omya to apply to the BLM for the direct sale of 70 acres on which overburden material is proposed to be placed in the future.
- Part F – Recovery of costs for the BLM.

Proposed Amended Mine and Reclamation Plan (refer to Figure 4)

The proposed project would expand the operational disturbance area of the quarries by approximately 190.1 acres and includes expansion of the existing quarries by approximately 26.7 acres and expansion of Overburden Site #1 by 16.9 acres. In addition, the proposed project would result in the creation of two additional overburden sites and expansion of several ancillary uses, resulting in an overall increase of the ancillary disturbance limits by 130.5 acres (see **Table 1**).

Quarry and overburden stockpile development and expansion would be phased. Included in the phased expansion and reclamation is concurrent quarry development and reclamation of equipment-accessible mined-out portions of the quarries. Therefore, the project includes both expanded mining operations, beyond what is currently permitted, and reclamation of the disturbed areas.

**Table 1
 Existing and Planned Operational Areas
 White Knob/White Ridge Quarries**

Quarry or Area	Existing Approved Areas (acres)	Proposed New Areas (acres)	Total New Project Areas (acres)
White Knob Quarry	35	6.1	41.1
White Knob Annex Quarry	7	5.5	12.5
White Ridge Quarry	18	15.1	33.1
Overburden Site #1	15 ¹	16.9	31.9

Quarry or Area	Existing Approved Areas (acres)	Proposed New Areas (acres)	Total New Project Areas (acres)
Overburden Site #2	- ¹	13.0	13.0
Overburden Site #3	- ¹	3.0	3.0
Ancillary Disturbance Limits ² (outside of above)	70	130.5	200.5
Totals	145	190.1	335.1

Note: Areas from 1986 Plan estimated to whole acres; proposed areas rounded to nearest tenth of an acre. Totals may be slightly different due to rounding.

1. Combined waste areas; not individually estimated in 1986 Plan.

2. Ancillary disturbance limits include haul/access roads to quarries and overburden sites, sediment basins and other erosion control features, storage pads, crusher location, west slope impacts, and incidental impacts from boulder roll-down.

The White Knob/White Ridge Quarries are currently permitted to operate through the year 2031. Known limestone resources would accommodate an increase to approximately 8.9 million tons of ore to the plant for a proposed additional 40 years of operations (2016 through 2055). Depending on market demand, the White Knob/White Ridge Quarries' average ore-to-plant production rates may slightly decrease to approximately 222,500 tons per year compared to the 2004–2006 baseline average of 275,400 tons of ore to the plant per year (see **Table 2**). In order to ensure that the processing plant has sufficient limestone for production, a maximum amount of 680,000 tons per year is listed to show the White Knob/White Ridge Quarries solely supplying the Lucerne Valley processing plant in the event that production from the nearby Butterfield/Sentinel Quarries is unavailable.

Table 2
White Knob-White Ridge Quarries
Three-Year Average and Amended Plan Proposed Throughputs
(Tons/Year)

	Material Excavated (Ore and Overburden)	Ore to Crusher	Overburden & Non-Spec Rock to On-Site Overburden Stockpile	Overburden & Non-Spec rock for Aggregate (to Processing Plant)	Crushed Ore to Processing Plant (Production)	Crusher Fines to Stockpile (Est. 17% of Ore to Crusher)
3-Year Average¹ (Baseline) (2004–2006)	512,000	324,000	188,000	0	275,400	48,600
Proposed Amended Plan (Average)¹	662,500	270,000 ³	392,500 (242,500) ⁴	150,000 ³	222,500	47,500
Proposed Amended Plan (Maximum)²	1,950,000	800,000 ³	1,150,000 (850,000) ⁴	Up to 300,000 ³	680,000	120,000

Sources: 3-year average from 2004–2006 White Knob Quarry Annual Production

Notes:

1. Three-year amounts are average actual production levels from 2004 through 2006, and the Amended Plan amounts are listed as both average and maximum proposed amounts. Percentages of ore, overburden and non-spec rock, and crusher waste (fines) vary with excavation phase and quality of limestone. The "material excavated" is the amount that includes the ore and overburden.
2. Maximum amounts are listed to show the White Knob/White Ridge Quarries solely supplying the Lucerne Valley processing plant in the event that production from the Butterfield/Sentinel Quarries is unavailable.
3. Per Amended Plan, varying amounts of quarry overburden and non-spec rock would be crushed and transported to the processing plant (along with fines) for aggregate sales depending on demand. Table lists potential overburden crushed and transported to the processing plant area.
4. Amounts of overburden including fines sold for aggregate would be subtracted from the amounts deposited on the overburden stockpiles.

The Amended Plan includes an option for crushing varying amounts of overburden and non-spec rock, and transporting this material to the processing plant (along with fines) for sales depending on demand. These amounts would be subtracted from the amounts deposited on the overburden stockpiles. **Table 2** lists potential overburden crushed and transported to the processing plant as an average of 150,000 tons per year with a maximum of 300,000 tons per year. The combination of all material transported to the processing plant would not exceed 680,000 tons per year.

Quarry and overburden stockpile development and expansion would be phased. Included in the phasing is concurrent quarry development and reclamation of equipment-accessible mined-out portions of the quarries.

The quarries are multi-bench open pit mines. Several working levels are operated at any one time within the quarries to supply the quota of ore needed to meet production demands. The multi-working-level concept allows for greater selectivity and blending of rock qualities to meet stringent quality standards of customers and allows maximum utilization of the resource. Four grades of ore are selectively mined. The ore is drilled and blasted, loaded into haul trucks, and crushed at the quarries. Crushed ore is loaded into off-road haul trucks and transported on the existing haul road as described previously to the processing plant in Lucerne Valley.

Once the final outer limit and bottom of the ore is reached in the White Knob Quarry, the quarry and the areas to its south (Central Area) would be partly backfilled to approximately the 5,575-foot level. The Amended Plan allows for backfill to be placed in the mined-out portions of the White Knob Quarry and also allows for an efficient mining plan, minimum disturbance of new ground, and concurrent reclamation of the quarries and overburden stockpiles.

At the conclusion of excavations, ten years of reclamation and revegetation activities would be implemented, followed by monitoring and remediation until revegetation goals are achieved. The reclaimed end use of the site would be open space wildlife habitat with native vegetation.

The previously approved SMARA reclamation plan includes a site-specific approved reclamation and revegetation plan, including growth media salvage, seeding and revegetation, seed collection and propagation, irrigation, site cleanup, public safety, rock and fill slope stability, drainage and erosion controls, a monitoring and maintenance plan, and bond release criteria. No changes in the approved revegetation plan are proposed other than increased acreage and timing.

Project Objectives

The Amended Plan was developed with the following objectives:

- Continue the mining and recovery of a unique high calcium limestone resource to supply the Lucerne Valley Processing Plant for the production of a wide range of calcium carbonate products.
- Minimize additional land disturbance through the expansion of contiguous existing and previously approved quarries and minimal expansion of existing overburden stockpiles and haul roads.
- Place overburden within completed portions of the White Knob Quarry to limit the area of disturbance to the degree possible.

- Meet the requirements of SMARA and the County surface mining ordinance.
- Minimize impacts to sensitive plants and wildlife through quarry design and ongoing bighorn sheep programs.
- Reclaim the site for post-mining uses which will include open space habitat.
- Reduce the slopes on overburden fill areas to an overall maximum slope of 2H:1V and revegetate disturbed areas to minimize aesthetic and erosion impacts.
- Mitigate for lost, threatened, and endangered species habitat in accordance with the Carbonate Habitat Management Strategy (CHMS) requirements by relinquishing unpatented mining claims or transfer of private property as determined adequate by the CHMS and regulatory agencies.
- Reclaim and maintain the site as necessary to eliminate hazards to public safety.

SURROUNDING LAND USE

AREA	EXISTING LAND USE	OFFICIAL COUNTY LAND USE DISTRICT
Site	Active mining including quarries, overburden stockpiles, access/haul roads, and sediment basins on private and federal lands	Resource Conservation (RC)
North	Vacant BLM land	RC
South	Vacant BLM land	RC
East	Vacant BLM land	RC
West	Vacant BLM land	RC

The project site is located in the San Bernardino Mountains southwest of Lucerne Valley in southwestern San Bernardino County. The White Knob/White Ridge Quarries are located on approximately 776.1 acres of patented fee lands under private ownership. The associated haul road is located on federal public land within a BLM right-of-way. The existing mine and planned expansions are bounded on all sides by vacant, open space managed by the BLM. Other than mining, which has historically been active in the area since the nineteenth century, land use in the surrounding area has been limited to occasional use by hikers and hunters.

OTHER PUBLIC AGENCIES WHOSE APPROVAL MAY BE REQUIRED (E.G., PERMITS, FINANCING APPROVAL, OR PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT)

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Section 7 Consultation with Forest Service through the Carbonate Habitat Management Strategy
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers – 404 Permit
- Office of Mine Reclamation – Approval of Amended Mine and Reclamation Plan
- Regional Water Quality Control Board – National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife – Streambed Alteration Agreement
- Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District – Air Quality Permitting

EVALUATION FORMAT

This Initial Study is prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21000, et seq., and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Title 14 Section 15000, et seq.). Specifically, the preparation of an Initial Study is guided by Section 15063 of the State CEQA Guidelines. The format of the study is presented as follows. The proposed project is evaluated based upon its effect on 18 major categories of environmental factors. Each factor is reviewed by responding to a series of questions regarding the impact of the project on each element of the overall factor. The Initial Study Checklist provides a formatted analysis that provides a determination of the effect of the proposed project on the factor and its elements. The effect of the proposed project is categorized into one of the following four categories of possible determinations:

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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"Substantiation" is provided to explain each determination. One of the four following conclusions is provided as a summary of the analysis for each of the major environmental factors.

1. **No Impact:** No impacts are identified or anticipated. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required and analysis in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is not required.
2. **Less Than Significant Impact:** No significant adverse impacts are identified or anticipated. Therefore, no mitigation measures are required, and analysis in an EIR is not required.
3. **Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated:** An impact that may have a "substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse change in any of the physical conditions within the area affected by the project" (CEQA Guidelines Section 15382). However, the incorporation of mitigation measures that are specified after analysis would reduce the project-related impact to a less than significant level. In the context of the Notice of Preparation (NOP), this Initial Study does not propose mitigation measures. Rather, issues that are identified as having potentially significant impacts will be addressed in the EIR. The EIR will propose appropriate mitigation measures and will evaluate the expected effectiveness of the measures in reducing the potential "significance" of the impact.
4. **Potentially Significant Impact:** Potentially significant adverse impacts have been identified or anticipated. An EIR is required to evaluate these impacts.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

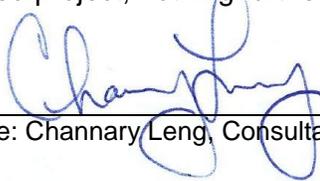
The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetics | <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture and Forestry Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geology/Soils |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greenhouse Gas Emissions | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazards & Hazardous Materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hydrology/Water Quality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land Use/Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Mineral Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Noise |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Recreation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation/Traffic | <input type="checkbox"/> Utilities/Service Systems | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mandatory Findings of Significance |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the lead agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation, the following finding is made:

- The proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- The proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- The proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or "potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect (1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and (2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.



Signature: Channary Leng, Consultant to County of San Bernardino

06/10/13

Date

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS – Would the project				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if project is located within the viewshed of any scenic route listed in the General Plan)

- a, c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Due to topography and the orientation of the quarry sites, views are and would be limited to those from the north, northwest, and northeast within Lucerne Valley. The project site is not and would not be visible from any developed/populated areas to the south within the San Bernardino National Forest, including the City of Big Bear Lake (and from the lake itself), Fawnskin, and Big Bear City, due to the intervening ridges located north of the lake and the relatively lower elevations of the lake itself.

The Amended Plan includes expansion of the existing OB-1 and the addition of OB-2 and OB-3 on existing and proposed mine areas that would be visible as additional white slopes or small mounds. The white tones of mined limestone and the overburden areas would increase with project development but would be similar in nature to the existing conditions and other quarries to the east. Phased, concurrent, and final reclamation would colorize and revegetate the roll-down slopes, overburden areas, and quarry benches to blend with the natural-colored slopes. Rock staining and vegetation on the existing north slopes have demonstrated a marked reduction in the contrasting tones and reduced visual contrasts.

Regardless, the proposed project has the potential to significantly adversely affect a scenic view and/or substantially degrade the existing visual character and quality of the site. Therefore, potential long-term visual impacts of the proposed Amended Plan will be analyzed in the EIR.

- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not be visible from highways designated by the State of California as a scenic route. State Route 18 is located approximately 6 miles north and east of the project site; however, it is not designated by the State of California as a scenic route. This impact will not need to be evaluated further in the EIR.
- d) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. No new light sources are proposed, and therefore no impacts would occur. This impact will not need to be evaluated further in the EIR.

Issues	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES – In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Department of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board. Would the project:

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland) as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to nonagricultural use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forestland (as defined in Public Resources Code Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code Section 51104(g))? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Result in the loss of forestland or conversion of forestland to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Involve other changes in the existing environment, which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to nonagricultural use or conversion of forestland to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if project is located in the Important Farmlands Overlay)

- a, e) **No Impact.** The California Resources Agency defines Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance for San Bernardino County as farmlands that include dryland grains of wheat, barley, and oats, and dryland pasture. The project site does not meet these characteristics.

The project site is located on the steep northern slopes of the San Bernardino Mountains, where both the topography and the soils are unsuitable for agriculture. The proposed project would not directly or indirectly convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency. Therefore, no impact is anticipated, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

- b) **No Impact.** The project site is not designated as an agricultural land use and is not subject to a Williamson Act contract. The proposed project is consistent with existing on-site uses and would not conflict with current zoning or uses at the site. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- c, d) **No Impact.** The project site does not contain any forested land and is not zoned as forestland or timberland. Implementation of the Amended Plan would not directly or indirectly result in the conversion or rezoning or any such land. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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III. AIR QUALITY – Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district might be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

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|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION: *(Discuss conformity with the South Coast Air Quality Management Plan, if applicable)*

- a-c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** An air quality study will be prepared for the EIR for the proposed project. Criteria pollutant emission calculations and air quality modeling will be performed for the proposed expansion of quarry operations. Results will be compared with federal and state ambient air quality standards and the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District (MDAQMD) CEQA emissions significance thresholds to determine potential significant impacts. Potential conflicts with implementation of the MDAQMD air quality plans and cumulative impacts will be assessed in the EIR. Findings of the air quality study will be evaluated in the EIR and mitigation provided as applicable.
- d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Toxic air contaminant (TAC) emission calculations and a project health risk analysis will be prepared for the proposed operational increase and compared with the applicable federal, state, and MDAQMD CEQA health risk significance thresholds. Potential impacts will be evaluated in the EIR.
- e) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not produce any objectionable odors. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES – Would the project:

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|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Have substantial adverse effects, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted habitat conservation plan, natural community conservation plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if project is located in the Biological Resources Overlay or contains habitat for any species listed in the California Natural Diversity Database)

Note to the reader: As of January 1, 2013, the agency formerly known as the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) changed its name to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). For purposes of this discussion, the agency names and abbreviations are interchangeable.

- a, b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The carbonate soils, including limestone, in the northern San Bernardino Mountains provide a unique habitat, and there are five federally listed threatened or endangered plant species endemic to carbonate soils. The project site is not located within

designated critical habitat for these carbonate-endemic plants. An intensive collaborative effort led to the development of the CHMS in 2003. The strategy is designed to provide long-term protection for the carbonate-endemic plants and also provide for continued long-term mining in the San Bernardino Mountains. Portions of the carbonate habitats are protected from mining impacts in perpetuity within the carbonate habitat reserves dedicated and managed as described in the CHMS. "Take" of listed carbonate-endemic plants is permitted under the strategy and mitigated by permanent mining claim or private property set-aside and through management of off-site plant occurrences as outlined in the CHMS.

Although the site is not designated as critical habitat for any species by the USFWS, three federally listed threatened or endangered plant species do occur near or on the project site: Cushenbury buckwheat, Cushenbury oxytheca, and Parish's daisy. Several special-status plants also occur on either the proposed White Ridge deposit access road alignment or in the potential roll-down area: bluish spike-moss, Coville's dwarf abronia, San Bernardino Mountains dudleya, Parish's alumroot, and an unidentified jewelflower (either San Bernardino jewelflower or southern jewelflower).

Biological surveys of the project site were completed in 2007 and 2012. No wildlife species currently listed on the federal list of threatened or endangered species are known to inhabit the expansion areas. However, sensitive wildlife could occur in the project area, including the desert tortoise, southern rubber boa, gray vireo, loggerhead shrike, raptors, Mojave ground squirrel, lodgepole chipmunk, Nelson's bighorn sheep, and American badger.

Omya intends to develop the quarry sites consistent with the CHMS and guidelines and would mitigate impacts to listed species as applicable through permanent relinquishment of mining claims or transfer of private property in accordance with the CHMS requirements and consultation with the County. The EIR will assess biological resources, potential impacts, and consistency with the CHMS.

- c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Numerous drainage channels occur on or near the project site. Construction activities and ongoing mining activities could result in impacts to these drainages. A jurisdictional delineation of the project area was conducted to identify potentially occurring state and federal jurisdictional water resources, and to identify potential project impacts to these resources. A total of 3.4 acres of ephemeral streambed vegetated with California juniper series upland vegetation was identified in the delineation report to occur within the project survey area. Drainages at the project site are tributary to Rabbit Lake, a dry lakebed. Additionally, the jurisdictional delineation identified a total of 0.75 acres of wetland habitat. Three wetlands were identified to occur at the location of ground water springs and a seep. Potential impacts to these drainage and wetland features will be evaluated in the EIR.
- d) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The project site is in an area that has been partially fragmented by previous and ongoing mining. The proposed project would contribute to the existing cumulative effects of these alterations to regional wildlife movement, including north-south movement by terrestrial species between the desert to the north and forests to the south, including Nelson's bighorn sheep. Potential impacts will be evaluated in the EIR.
- e) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The San Bernardino County Native Plant Protection policy (1989) regulates removal of trees greater than 6 inches diameter at breast height (dbh), smoke trees, mesquite, creosote rings, and all plants in the agave family, including Joshua trees. Due to elevation

and habitat, no smoke trees, mesquite, or creosote rings would be expected on the site. This will be evaluated in the EIR.

- f) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site lies within the Carbonate Habitat Management Strategy (Olson 2003), a habitat conservation plan for carbonate soil types. The proposed project's consistency with and implementation of this plan will be evaluated in the EIR.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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V. CULTURAL RESOURCES – Would the project

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if the project is located in the Cultural or Paleontologic Resources overlays or cite results of cultural resource review)

a–d) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Cultural resources and paleontological resources assessments were previously prepared for the proposed project. Based on the conclusions identified in these reports, the presence of cultural and paleontological resources within the study area are highly unlikely. No significant impacts are expected and recommendations to address resources discovered during mining operations have been identified. The EIR will address these cultural and paleontological resources recommendations.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS – Would the project:

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|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: | | | | |
| i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map Issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii. Strong seismic ground shaking? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iv. Landslides? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 181-B of the California Building Code (2001) creating substantial risks to life or property? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if project is located in the Geologic Hazards Overlay District)

- a, c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** (i–iv) No active faults are located in the area of the quarries. No adverse geological conditions have been identified that would have an adverse impact on existing or future mining operations. A slope stability study has been completed for the project to address stability of future cut and embankment slopes. Geologic stability will be analyzed further in the EIR.

- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Numerous erosion and sedimentation controls currently exist in the mining and stockpile areas and along the haul road to limit runoff, to minimize or prevent erosion, and to promote settling of suspended solids before the runoff leaves the site. Along the haul road, runoff is contained within the roadway by berms. As part of the proposed project, the roadway would be graded to direct runoff into catchment basins. Within the quarries, runoff from slopes, benches, roads, and ramps would be directed into the mined-out portion of the quarries or into sediment sumps located near OB-1. At the quarries, the final backfill would be designed to act as a permanent sediment basin for future sediment control.

A large number of energy dissipaters, sediment capture basins, riprap, hay bales, and/or silt fences trap sediment and minimize the potential for off-site transport. Operations also limit surface disturbance to minimum areas, and concurrent reclamation and revegetation would stabilize disturbed pads and slopes. Erosion control impacts and measures for the proposed project will be further evaluated in the EIR.

- d) **No Impact.** The project site is not located in an area that has been identified by the County Building and Safety Geologist as having the potential for expansive soils. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- e) **No Impact.** Septic tanks and/or alternative wastewater disposal systems are not proposed as part of the project. Therefore, no impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

<i>Issues</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS – Would the project:

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|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a, b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The State of California has determined that global climate change is a threat to the environment and that human activity generating greenhouse gases (GHG) influences global climate change. Global climate change refers to changes in average climatic conditions on earth as a whole, including temperature, wind patterns, precipitation, and storms.

Global climate change regulation is continuing to evolve. The County adopted a GHG Emission Reduction Plan in December 2011. This plan is based on the premise that the County and the community it represents are uniquely capable of addressing emissions associated with sources under the County’s jurisdiction and that the County’s emission reduction efforts should coordinate with the state strategies of reducing emissions in order to reduce emissions in an efficient and cost-effective manner. The GHG Emission Reduction Plan presents a comprehensive set of actions to reduce the county’s internal and external GHG emissions to 15 percent below current levels by 2020, consistent with the AB 32 Scoping Plan.

An analysis will be prepared as part of the air quality study that will quantify the operational emissions of GHGs resulting from the proposed project, determine its GHG impact, and recommend mitigation as appropriate. Findings of the analysis will be evaluated in the EIR.

Issues	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS – Would the project:

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a, b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project involves the use of materials common to the mining industry and includes the transport, storage, and use of fuels, lubricants, and explosives. The project could potentially create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, including explosives and fuel. The operator would continue to comply with all applicable federal and state safety rules and regulations regarding hazardous materials.

Fuel for mobile equipment is stored at the quarry sites in an approved double-walled tank with a spill control berm. Mine equipment is fueled at the fuel storage site. Scheduled equipment maintenance occurs at the main plant site. Minor or emergency repairs may be conducted at the quarries; however, any waste oil generated at the mine site is collected and transported for off-site disposal by approved methods and by properly trained and licensed personnel.

No processing chemicals are used and no wastewater is produced from the mining and crushing operations.

Existing and proposed mining operations would require one blast per week. Therefore, the overall current levels of blasting would remain the same. However, blasting would occur for the extended life of the project through 2055. Blasting operations would continue to be conducted by licensed individuals in such a manner as to meet or exceed Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) and California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal-OSHA) requirements.

Blasting operations would involve drilling, placement of charges, and detonation of the charges by a blaster with all required licenses and permits for handling explosives. All explosives and detonators would be transported, handled, and stored in accordance with all federal, state, and local regulations.

The blasting agent ammonium nitrate and fuel oil (ANFO) explosives used at the quarries are currently stored separately in magazines located at designated locations at Omya's Lucerne Valley operations per all federal, state, and local regulations. The explosives are only transported to the quarry sites by a licensed contractor as necessary.

Blasts in the Omya quarries are relatively small to maximize selectivity. The active quarry is located near the base of the range in the central portion of the mountain range. The closest residence is located over 2 miles north of the quarry, and one or more major mountain ridges are present between quarries and residences to the south. Blasting has occurred for over 25 years with no adverse impact on people, structures, or wildlife. The blasts cannot be seen, heard, or felt in any residential areas. Based on the current measures in place, it is anticipated that impacts would be less than significant.

The project has the potential to create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. However, public safety measures and state and federal requirements have already been put in place at the project site. For example, vehicular access to the mining area is only on a restricted access/haul road with multiple highly visible warning signs directing the public

away from the active mining area. The haul road is also watched by company personnel during operating hours. During non-operating times, locked steel gates have been installed on all roads accessing both the active and inactive quarry sites to restrict vehicular access. Berms have been placed on jeep and off-road vehicle (ORV) trails to restrict ORV access to the project site. Signs have also been, and would in the future be, placed around the perimeter of the mining area directing vehicles and foot traffic away from the mining and reclamation area. All active mining areas comply with the MSHA and Cal-OSHA mine safety regulations. Furthermore, during the proposed activities, signs would be posted at all site access points identifying the area as private property and specifying that only authorized personnel shall be allowed entry. In addition, the mining pit perimeter is currently fenced off to vehicle and foot traffic with posted signs. Based on these precautions, the proposed project would create a less than significant impact on public health and safety. These issues will not be discussed further in the EIR.

- c) **No Impact.** The proposed project involves the use of materials common to the mining industry and includes the transport, storage, and use of fuels, lubricants, and explosives. The operator would continue to comply with all applicable federal and state safety rules and regulations regarding hazardous materials. During operations, diesel exhaust would be generated by heavy construction-type equipment; however, no existing school facilities or proposed school facilities are located within a quarter-mile radius of the project site. The nearest schools include North Shore Elementary, located approximately 6 miles southeast of the project site in Big Bear Lake, and Lucerne Valley Middle School, located approximately 6 miles northeast of the project site. No impacts to nearby schools are anticipated, and this impact will not be analyzed in the EIR.
- d) **No Impact.** The project site is not identified on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. No impacts will occur, and this issue will not be analyzed in the EIR.
- e) **No Impact.** As shown on San Bernardino County General Plan Hazards Overlay Maps FI09B and FH16B, the project site occurs within Airport Safety Review Area 4 (AR4). According to San Bernardino County Development Code Section 82.09.030, Airport Safety, AR4 includes the low-altitude/high-speed corridors designated for military aircraft use. The nearest public/private airports include Big Bear City Airport, located approximately 8 miles southeast of the site, and Rabbit Ranch Airport in Lucerne Valley, approximately 4 miles north of the site. Since no new human-occupied structures are proposed, potentially significant impacts are not anticipated. In addition, existing and proposed operations do not exceed height limits that could potentially impact military aircraft flight patterns. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in safety hazard impacts from aircraft-related uses. No additional discussion is warranted in the EIR.
- f) **No Impact.** The project site is not within the vicinity or approach/departure flight path of a private airstrip. No impacts related to a private airstrip would occur, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- g) **No Impact.** Activities associated with the proposed project would not impede existing emergency response plans for the project site and/or other land uses in the project vicinity. All vehicles and stationary equipment would be staged off public roads and would not block emergency access routes. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not impair implementation of, or physically interfere with, an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan. This impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

- h) **Less Than Significant Impact.** According to San Bernardino County General Plan Maps FI09B and FH16B, the project site is located in Fire Safety Review Area (FS-1), which includes areas in the mountains and the valley foothills. It also includes all the land generally within the San Bernardino National Forest boundary and is characterized by areas with moderate and steep terrain and moderate to heavy fuel loading contributing to high fire hazard conditions. The project site includes internal haul/access roads to allow for emergency egress and safe zones in the event of a wildfire. The proposed project would not contribute to or be impacted by surrounding fuel loads, and a fuel modification zone would not be required. No new human-occupied structures are proposed as part of the project. This impact will be less than significant and will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY – Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level, which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structure which would impede or redirect flood flows? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a, f) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Numerous erosion and sedimentation controls currently exist in the mining and stockpile areas and along the haul road to limit runoff, to minimize or prevent erosion, and to promote settling of suspended solids before the runoff leaves the site. Along the haul road, runoff is contained within the roadway by berms. As part of the proposed project, the roadway would be graded to direct runoff into catchment basins. Within the quarries, runoff from slopes, benches, roads, and ramps would be directed into the mined-out portion of the quarries or into sediment sumps located near OB-1. At the quarries, the final backfill would be designed to act as a permanent sediment basin for future sediment control. Operations also limit surface disturbance to minimum areas, and concurrent reclamation and revegetation would stabilize disturbed pads and slopes.

All operations on-site would comply with a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit for Storm Water Discharges associated with industrial activities and employ stormwater best management practices (BMPs). NPDES goals are to eliminate unauthorized non-stormwater discharges and to monitor stormwater discharge requirements. Water quality and erosion control will be evaluated in the EIR.

- b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The White Knob/White Ridge Quarries utilize a relatively small amount of groundwater during operations. Approximately 2.75 acre-feet of water are used annually for dust suppression in the quarries, overburden placement areas, haul/access roads, and at the crusher. With the increase in production, water usage is expected to increase to approximately 5 acre-feet per year. No substantial changes are proposed other than that adequate dust control would be maintained. Note that the use of magnesium chloride on roads and other active mine areas and the occurrence of typically wet winter weather reduce the amount of water needed to control dust.

Water used to control dust is obtained from two previously permitted sources: a well located at the plant site in Lucerne Valley and a well located in Crystal Creek Canyon near Turnout 5 on the Crystal Creek haul road. These water sources would be used to meet water demands of the proposed operations. No substantial changes in overall water use are proposed. Both existing wells are permitted by the California State Water Resources Control Board and the County of San Bernardino Department of Environmental Health Services (Permit #06259026). The plant well has been assigned recordation number 36011 by the State Water Resources Control Board. Bottled drinking water for employees at the mining area is brought to the site as necessary. No surface water is used in the operation. There would be no added diversions or storage for water supply.

The project site is not within the service area of a public water supplier, but it is within the boundaries of the Mojave Water Agency (MWA). MWA is a State Water Project contractor, a regional groundwater management agency, and serves as Watermaster for the adjudicated Mojave Basin. The MWA published its Eighteenth Annual Report for the 2010–11 Water Year on May 1, 2012. The report summarizes information required by the judgment and includes a summary of the Watermaster's activities and water supply conditions for the water year. Omya has a verified base annual production allocation of 23 acre-feet per year for its two wells, and water usage over the past five years (2007 through 2011) has been 19, 14, 14, 14, and 14 acre-feet per year, respectively (MWA 2012). Approximately 2.75 acre-feet of this annual water usage is used for dust suppression at the White Knob/White Ridge Quarries site. The expected increase of water usage for the proposed project of 2.25 acre-feet per year would not exceed Omya's base allocation, even

considering the higher usage amount in 2007 of 19 acre-feet per year.

Accordingly, the proposed project would not substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level. Note that CEQA requires a Water Supply Assessment to be conducted for the project, and findings on water supply will be disclosed in the EIR.

- c-e) **Potentially Significant Impact.** Numerous erosion and sedimentation controls currently exist in the mining and stockpile areas and along the haul road to limit runoff, to minimize or prevent erosion, and to promote settling of suspended solids before the runoff leaves the site. Along the haul road, runoff is contained within the roadway by berms. As part of the proposed project, the roadway would be graded to direct runoff into catchment basins. Within the quarries, runoff from slopes, benches, roads, and ramps would be directed into the mined-out portion of the quarries or into sediment sumps located near OB-1. At the quarries, the final backfill would be designed to act as a permanent sediment basin for future sediment control. Potential impacts resulting from these proposed storm drainage facility improvements will be evaluated in the EIR.
- g, h) **No Impact.** The project site does not occur within a 100-year flood hazard area, does not include the construction of housing, and would not place housing within a floodplain. No impacts would occur, and no further analysis is required in the EIR.
- i) **No Impact.** The project site and surrounding area is not located inside any designated dam inundation area. The proposed project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving flooding, including flooding, as a result of the failure of a levee or dam, because no levee or dam is proposed as part of this project. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- j) **No Impact.** A seiche is an oscillating surface wave in a restricted or enclosed body of water generated by ground motion, usually during an earthquake. Inundation from a seiche can occur if the wave overflows a containment wall or the banks of a water body. Since the project site is not located adjacent to any body of water that has the potential of seiche or tsunami, no impacts are anticipated. This impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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X. LAND USE AND PLANNING – Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Physically divide an established community? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a) **No Impact.** The project site is surrounded by vacant open space with the nearest community, Lucerne Valley, located approximately 2 miles to the north. Further, the proposed project is an expansion of an existing use and would be consistent with the County General Plan land use designation for the site. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in the division of an established community and would have no impact. This impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project because the project is consistent with all applicable land use policies and regulations of the County of San Bernardino General Plan. No impacts would result.
- c) **No Impact.** The project site lies within the Carbonate Habitat Management Strategy (Olson 2003), a habitat conservation plan for carbonate soil types. The proposed project's consistency with and implementation of this plan will be evaluated in the Biological Resources section of the EIR, as described in Section IV of this Initial Study.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XI. MINERAL RESOURCES – Would the project:

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if project is located within the Mineral Resource Zone Overlay):
 MRZ-3a

a, b) **No Impact.** Once mined, a measurement of this resource would be depleted; however, the proposed project is consistent with the County’s policy that protects the current and future availability of mineral resources. The primary goal in evaluating a land use that does not include mineral extraction activities is to ensure that the mineral potential of land is recognized and that decision-makers do not preclude the conservation, potential for development, and use of the valuable mineral resources including water. Regulation and reclamation of the project site as required by SMARA would permit the continued availability of the mineral resources and provide for the protection and subsequent beneficial use of those mineral resources while minimizing impacts on the public and the environment. No impact to mineral resources is expected, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XII. NOISE – Would the project result in:

- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within 2 miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION: (Check if the project is located in the Noise Hazard Overlay District or is subject to severe noise levels according to the General Plan Noise Element):

- a, c, **Less Than Significant Impact.** Operations are required to conform with all applicable County noise control regulations. The active quarry is located near the base of the range in the central portion of the mountain range. The closest residence is located over 2 miles north of the quarries, and one or more major mountain ridges are present between quarries and residences to the south. Operations and blasting are not currently audible to any residential areas and have occurred for over 25 years with no adverse impact on people, structures, or wildlife. These impacts would be less than significant and will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- d) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Blasting operations would continue to be conducted by licensed individuals in such a manner as to meet or exceed MSHA and Cal-OSHA requirements. Mining activities vary throughout the year and may occur 24 hours per day, 7 days a week, depending on operational requirements. Blasting is restricted to daylight hours. These operational hours are not

changing with implementation of the proposed project.

Blasts in the Omya quarries are relatively small to maximize selectivity. The active quarry is located near the base of the range in the central portion of the mountain range. There are no residences or other sensitive receptors within 2 miles of the quarry, and one or more major mountain ridges are present between quarries and residences to the south. Operations and blasting cannot be seen, heard, or felt in any residential areas or by other sensitive receptors. No changes are proposed from the existing permitted arrangements. In terms of potential effects on people, this impact will be less than significant and will not be analyzed further in the EIR. However, a discussion of the potential effects of blasting noise and vibration on wildlife will be addressed in the Biological Resources section of the EIR.

- e, f) **No Impact.** As shown on San Bernardino County General Plan, Hazards Overlay Maps FI09B and FH16B, the project site occurs within Airport Safety Review Area 4 (AR4). According to San Bernardino County Development Code Section 82.09.030, Airport Safety, AR4 includes the low-altitude/high-speed corridors designated for military aircraft use. The nearest public/private airports include Big Bear City Airport, located approximately 8 miles southeast of the site, and Rabbit Ranch Airport in Lucerne Valley, approximately 4 miles north of the site. Since no new human-occupied structures are proposed, potentially significant impacts are not anticipated. In addition, existing and proposed operations do not exceed height limits that could potentially impact military aircraft flight patterns. No impacts from airport-related noise would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING – Would the project:

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not directly stimulate population growth (e.g., it would not add housing or create a new business) nor would it indirectly stimulate growth (e.g., through the construction of new infrastructure). No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- b, c) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not displace substantial numbers of existing housing units or people or require the construction of replacement housing because no housing units are proposed to be demolished. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES

- a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services, including fire and police protection, schools, parks or other public facilities. Although the proposed project would result in a change in mine production levels, proposed operations would not require a substantial change in employment, and therefore demands for services would not increase significantly. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
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XV. RECREATION

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION:

a, b) **No Impact.** The project does not include housing that would induce population growth in adjacent areas and ultimately increase the use of park facilities or other recreational facilities in the region. No impacts are anticipated, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC – Would the project:

- | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Result in inadequate emergency access? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety facilities? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a, b) **Less Than Significant Impact.** Existing and proposed operations include transporting crushed ore in off-road haul trucks approximately 5 miles northeast on a haul road that is not open to the public to the existing processing plant. Implementation of the proposed project would increase haul truck trips to and from the project site. However, these additional trips would not occur on public roadways and would not affect area traffic conditions. The proposed project could increase worker trips to and from the project site; however, these additional trips are expected to be minimal and would not have a significant effect on area traffic conditions. These impacts would be less than significant and will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

- c) **No Impact.** Implementation of the proposed project would not affect air traffic patterns at any airport or airstrip because there are none in the immediate vicinity and because the project does not involve the construction of any tall structures or other obstacles to air traffic and navigation. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- d) **No Impact.** Existing and proposed operations at the project site would not affect public streets. The proposed project does not involve any road development or design features that could substantially increase hazards on public road, or changes in the transportation of rock or other materials on public roads. The project site is surrounded by vacant BLM land, and the proposed project is an expansion of an existing use. Therefore, no inconsistent uses would occur. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- e) **No Impact.** Activities associated with the proposed project would not impede existing emergency response plans for the project site and/or other land uses in the vicinity. All vehicles and stationary equipment would be staged off public roads and would not block emergency access routes. In addition, no road closures would be required. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- f) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not involve any long-term increases in traffic that would conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS – Would the project:

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Require or result in the construction of new stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Be served by a landfill(s) with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a) **Less Than Significant Impact.** No wastewater is or would be discharged from the on-site operations. Control of surface drainage, erosion, and sedimentation of operations and the haul road are included in Omya's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which has been filed with the California State Water Resources Control Board. The SWPPP would continue to be updated until mining and reclamation activities end. The SWPPP includes specific prohibitions; effluent limitations; and stormwater pollution prevention plans, including source identification, practice to reduce pollutants, assessment of pollutant sources, materials inventory, preventative maintenance program, spill prevention and response procedures, general stormwater management practices, training, record keeping, sampling procedures, and monitoring programs.

All operations on-site would comply with a NPDES General Permit for Storm Water Discharges associated with industrial activities and employ stormwater best management practices. NPDES

goals are to eliminate unauthorized non-stormwater discharges and to monitor stormwater discharges requirements. Water applied to roads and active mining areas to reduce fugitive dust would evaporate; therefore, the proposed project would not produce any runoff during normal operations. Because the project would not generate any wastewater and all surface drainage would comply with an approved SWPPP, this impact would be less than significant and will not need to be evaluated further in the EIR.

- b) **No Impact.** The proposed project's water demands would be met with the use of groundwater pumped from existing wells that serve the current mine operations. No expansion of a water treatment system would be required. In addition, the project would not generate wastewater. The only water use would be water applied to roads and active mining areas to control fugitive dust. Employees are provided portable toilets on-site. No impacts to water or wastewater treatment systems would occur, and these impacts will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.
- c) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The project proposes expansion of existing and construction of new stormwater basins on the project site. The construction of these improvements will be analyzed further in the EIR.
- d) **Less Than Significant Impact.** The White Knob-White Ridge Quarries utilize groundwater during operations. The project site is not within the service area of a public water supplier but is within the boundaries of the Mojave Water Agency (MWA). MWA is a State Water Project contractor, a regional groundwater management agency, and serves as Watermaster for the adjudicated Mojave Basin. The MWA published its Eighteenth Annual Report for the 2010–11 Water Year on May 1, 2012. The report summarizes information required by the judgment and includes a summary of the Watermaster's activities and water supply conditions for the water year. Omya has a verified base annual production allocation of 23 acre-feet per year for its two wells, and water usage over the past five years (2007 through 2011) has been 19, 14, 14, 14, and 14 acre-feet per year, respectively (MWA 2012). Approximately 2.75 acre-feet of this annual water usage are currently used for dust suppression at the White Knob-White Ridge Quarries site. The expected increase of water usage for the proposed project of 2.25 acre-feet per year would not exceed Omya's base allocation, even considering the higher usage amount in 2007 of 19 acre-feet per year.

Water is obtained from two previously permitted sources: a well located at the plant site in Lucerne Valley and a well located in Crystal Creek Canyon near Turn 5 on the Crystal Creek haul road. No surface water is used in the operation. There are no planned additional diversions or storage for water supply. No treatment facilities would be needed. Water would be hauled in a water truck and sprayed on the haul roads and active mining and overburden areas to minimize fugitive dust. The water truck would work during active quarry operations as needed to control visible dust.

The proposed project would not substantially deplete water supplies or require new entitlements. Therefore, this impact would be less than significant. Note that CEQA requires a Water Supply Assessment to be conducted for the project, and findings on water supply will be discussed in the Hydrology and Water Quality section of the EIR.

- e) **No Impact.** The project site is not served by a public sewer system, and the proposed project would not require sewer collection or treatment services. Therefore, no off-site discharge of treated wastewater would occur. No impacts related to wastewater treatment would occur, and this impact will not need to be analyzed in the EIR.

- f, g) **No Impact.** The proposed project would not require any additional solid waste services. Office operations would not increase over existing levels associated with an increase in production levels, and therefore solid waste generated on-site would not increase. Waste rock would be stockpiled within the quarry footprints to eliminate the need for off-site waste rock stockpiles or hauled to the processing plant for production of aggregate. No impacts would result, and this impact will not need to be analyzed further in the EIR.

Issues	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

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|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Does the project have environmental effects, which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SUBSTANTIATION:

- a) **Potentially Significant Impact.** The proposed project may potentially affect biological resources including listed carbonate-endemic plants by removal of soils, vegetation, and habitat throughout the site and the indirect or off-site effects of dust and other disturbances to adjacent vegetation and wildlife habitat. Potential impacts to biological resources will be evaluated in the EIR.
- b) **Potentially Significant Impact.** This Initial Study has identified potentially significant impacts that could also be cumulatively considerable. Potentially significant cumulative effects will be discussed in the EIR.
- c) **Potentially Significant Impact.** An air quality study will be prepared as part of the EIR for the proposed project. Criteria pollutant emission calculations will be performed for the baseline and mine activities, and the proposed project operational emissions increases will be compared with federal and state ambient air quality standards and MDAQMD CEQA emissions significance thresholds. Toxic air contaminant (TAC) emission calculations will be estimated and a project health risk analysis will be prepared.

GENERAL REFERENCES

California Department of Conservation, Office of Mine Reclamation. 2012. Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA).

California Department of Toxic Substances Control. Envirostor Website.

CEQA Guidelines, Appendix G, as updated through 2011.

Mojave Water Agency. 2012. *Eighteenth Annual Report for the 2010–11 Water Year*.

Omya California. 2013. *Amended Mine and Reclamation Plan*.

San Bernardino County. *San Bernardino County General Plan* (with updates).

San Bernardino County. Land Use Plan General Plan Hazard Overlays: Map Panel FH16 B – Butler Peak.

San Bernardino County. Land Use Plan General Plan Hazard Overlays: Map Panel FI09 B – Fawnskin.

San Bernardino National Forest Association prepared by Todd G. Olson. 2003. *Carbonate Habitat Management Strategy (CHMS)*.