

### **3.5 Population and Housing**

This section describes the existing conditions related to population and housing within the project area, and addresses the impacts that would result from project implementation.

#### **3.5.1 Existing Conditions**

##### **3.5.1.1 *Local Setting***

The County encompasses approximately 4,261 square miles in Southern California and has a population of just over 3 million residents. The diverse combination of mountains, hills, flatlands, and coastline of the Pacific Ocean characterizes the natural setting of San Diego County. The County includes 19 jurisdictions, including various local community planning areas with associated communities/subregional plans (SANDAG 2011).

The 479.5-acre project site is located in the El Monte Valley within the Lakeside Community Planning Area, as described in the County of San Diego General Plan (2011). The proposed mining and reclamation activities would affect approximately 262 acres of the total 479.5 acres. The project site is bordered by El Monte Road to the south and Willow Road to the north. The proposed project is a mineral extraction project, which would allow extraction of approximately 12.5 million tons of mineral resource from the El Monte Valley for commercial use. The proposed project would also implement a Reclamation Plan to reclaim mined lands to a beneficial end use of open space with recreational trails over a 16-year period.

##### **3.5.1.2 *Regulatory Framework***

###### Federal

There are no applicable federal regulations.

###### State

###### *California State Housing Element Law*

Housing element law requires local governments to adequately plan to meet their existing and projected housing needs, including their share of the regional housing need, or RHNA. A complete analysis is required to include quantification and a descriptive analysis of the specific needs and resources available to address identified needs.

## Local

### *County of San Diego General Plan, Housing Element*

The County of San Diego's General Plan (General Plan) was comprehensively updated in 2011. The Housing Element of the General Plan was most recently updated in 2017. The Housing Element forecasts and directs future growth in the unincorporated areas of the County with a projected capacity that will accommodate more than 232,000 existing and future homes. The Housing Element covers the planning period of January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2020 and states a regional need of 22,412 residential units.

### **3.5.2 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination as to Significance**

San Diego County does not have specified guidance for determining the significance for population and housing and, therefore, the population and housing analysis will be entirely based upon the significance criteria stated in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. A significant impact to population and housing would result if the proposed project would:

1. 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).
2. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.
3. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

#### **3.5.2.1 Issue 1: Induce Substantial Population Growth**

##### Analysis

Approximately eight full-time positions would be necessary to operate the mining equipment and the plant. These positions would be responsible for tasks associated with mining and processing activities including environmental compliance, safety, management and administrative tasks. It is anticipated that all workers and employees would be sourced from the local population in the area. The creation of jobs would not induce population growth in the area considering the number of new employees needed. Implementation of the proposed project would not generate a significant increase in employees that would require new housing or infrastructure to support this increase of employees at the project site. Impacts would be **less than significant**.

### **3.5.2.2 Issues 2 and 3: Displace Substantial Numbers of Housing or People**

#### Analysis

The project site and area consists of rural agricultural lands placed within a broad floodplain, surrounded by steep sloping valley sidewalls. Existing residences are located primarily north of Willow Road and south of the project site, with fewer residences located to the east and west of the project site; however, these existing residences would not be displaced as a result of project implementation. The project site does not contain any existing housing or residential areas, and the proposed project would not displace any existing housing or people, nor necessitate the construction of replacement housing elsewhere as a result of project implementation. Thus, there are **no impacts**.

### **3.5.3 Cumulative Impact Analysis**

#### Issue 1: Induce Substantial Population Growth

Cumulative projects are listed in Table 1-11 in Chapter 1.0, and show that a majority of the projects are residential development-type projects, including single-family detached and estate residential. These types of projects are likely to affect existing population levels in the project area by constructing new housing that could induce population growth. The proposed project individually, however, would not result in or require the construction of new or replacement housing, or induce population growth. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to population growth are **not considered cumulatively considerable**.

#### Issues 2 and 3: Displace Substantial Numbers of Housing or People

The majority of the cumulative projects are residential development type projects that would create new housing instead of displacing housing or people. As discussed above, the proposed project would not require the construction of new or require replacement housing. Therefore, cumulative impacts related to the substantial displacement of housing or people are **not considered cumulatively considerable**.

### **3.5.4 Significance of Impacts Prior to Mitigation**

As discussed above, no significant impacts related to population and housing would result from the proposed project. Thus, no mitigation is required.

### **3.5.5 Conclusion**

The proposed project would not induce population growth and does not propose any physical or regulatory change that would remove a restriction to or encourage population growth in the project area. The project would not displace any existing housing or residents, either directly or cumulatively, in the project area or within San Diego County.

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