

3.9 Utilities and Service Systems

This section discusses potential impacts to utilities and service systems, including water supply, wastewater treatment, and solid waste hauling and disposal resulting from the implementation of the proposed project. The analysis is based on the review of existing resources, technical data, and applicable laws, regulations, and guidelines. Existing utilities and service systems information was obtained from various sources including the Lakeside Water District (LWD) and County websites, as well as the Groundwater Evaluation Technical Memorandum (AECOM 2018) which is included in Appendix R of this EIR, and the Lakeside Water District Urban Water Management Plan (LWD 2015).

3.9.1 Existing Conditions

Water Supply

While the project site is located within the jurisdiction of the Helix Water District, the project site would be served by the LWD through an existing water pipeline and meter. LWD serves a 20-square-mile service area with approximately 35,000 residents (LWD 2015).

LWD's water supply consists of both imported and local sources. Imported water is purchased as needed from the San Diego County Water Authority, which consists of a blend of Colorado River and Northern California water from the State Water Project. LWD's local sources of water consist of water supplied from the Vine Street Well Field. Table 3.9-1 shows the current and projected water supplies and demands within LWD from 2020 to 2035.

As shown in Table 3.9-1, the total supply in LWD's service area is projected to increase incrementally each year due to an increase in the San Diego County Water Authority's water supplies. Overall projected LWD demand is expected to increase incrementally from 2015 to 2035, with supply being greater than demand.

Most residents in the project area and adjacent areas (specifically those located adjacent to the project site) depend on private groundwater wells for water supply. As detailed in the Groundwater Evaluation Technical Memorandum (AECOM 2018), the project area is part of the larger El Monte Basin watershed. There are 14 existing wells located within the project site. Current annual groundwater consumption within the study area includes a combination of residential and agricultural water usage, Helix Water District pumping, City of San Diego pumping, County pumping for El Monte Regional Park, transpiration of groundwater-dependent vegetation (phreatophytes), and surface water evaporation in Hanson Pond. Total groundwater demand over the last 40 years has ranged from approximately 1,240 acre-feet per year (afy) to approximately 2,300 afy with a 40-year average annual groundwater demand of approximately 1,700 afy. Sources of groundwater recharge include rainfall recharge, underflow

beneath the El Capitan Dam, streambed infiltration, return flows from landscape irrigation and septic systems, mining pit run-on, and spills and overtopping of El Capitan Reservoir.

Wastewater

The proposed project is not located within the service area of any wastewater treatment providers, and LWD does not provide wastewater treatment. The residences located adjacent to the project site, excluding those to the southwest (which fall within the Lakeside Sanitation District's service area), utilize septic systems for wastewater treatment. The nearest wastewater treatment provider to the project site is the City of San Diego.

Solid Waste

The closest active permitted landfill to the project area is the Sycamore Landfill, located at 8514 Mast Boulevard at West Hills Parkway, located approximately 7 miles southwest of the project site. The landfill has a daily maximum throughput of 5,000 tons per day, and as of December 31, 2014, had a remaining capacity of 39,608,998 cubic yards of waste (or just under half of its total capacity) (Calrecycle 2015).

3.9.1.1 Regulatory Framework

Federal

Clean Water Act

The principle federal law pertaining to the regulation of water quality is the 1972 Federal Pollution Control Act (Clean Water Act). The Clean Water Act strives to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's water. The act sets up a system of water quality standards, discharge limitations, and permits. The fundamental purpose of this law is the protection of designated beneficial uses of water sources. The Clean Water Act was amended in 1987 to include urban and stormwater runoff.

State

State of California San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board

Acting under the State of California Water Resources Control Board, the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) regulates water quality in portions of San Diego, Orange, and Riverside Counties pursuant to the Federal Clean Water Act. RWQCB sets standards, determines regulatory compliance, issues discharge permits, and enforces other actions related to ensuring the water quality of the region.

Local

County of San Diego Watershed Protection Program – Portable Toilet Cleaning

The County of San Diego provides specific BMPs pertaining to portable toilet cleanup within the County. These include disposing of wastewater to the sanitary sewer at the job site or to a holding tank, disposing of holding tank contents to the sewer at the business's company headquarters or at an approved location, containing rinse water from cleaning portable toilet closets for disposal at the service facility headquarters or other approved facility, and placing portable toilet closets away from storm drains, waterways, and areas with high vehicle traffic (San Diego County 2015).

County of San Diego Construction and Demolition Debris Deposit Ordinance

To keep construction and demolition (C&D) materials out of local landfills and ensure they get recycled, the County requires that the majority of projects requiring building and demolition permits pay a refundable C&D Debris Recycling Deposit and divert at least 50 percent of their construction debris by recycling, reusing or donating usable materials (San Diego County 2008).

County of San Diego General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element

The County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element is intended to address the conservation, development, and use of natural resources, including water. The proposed project would be subject to complying with the following County General Plan Conservation and Open Space Element goals:

Goal COS-4: Water Management. A balanced and regionally integrated water management approach to achieve the long-term viability of the County's water quality and supply.

Policies

COS-4.2: Drought-Efficient Landscaping. Require efficient irrigation systems and in new development encourage the use of native plant species and non-invasive drought tolerant/low water use plants in landscaping.

COS-4.3: Storm water Filtration. Maximize storm water filtration and/or infiltration in areas that are not subject to high groundwater by maximizing the natural drainage patterns and the retention of natural vegetation and other pervious surfaces. This policy shall not apply in areas with high groundwater, where raising the water table could cause septic system failures, moisture damage to building slabs, and/or other problems.

Lakeside Community Plan

The proposed project would be subject to complying with the following Lakeside Community Plan's Public Facilities goal:

Facilities Goal: Provide adequate and efficient facilities and services for all residents of Lakeside that are appropriate to the community's rural needs.

3.9.2 Analysis of Project Effects and Determination as to Significance

The County does not have specified guidance for determining the significance for utilities and service systems and, therefore, the utilities and service systems analysis is based upon the significance criteria stated in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines. A significant impact to utilities and service systems would occur if the proposed project would:

1. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board;
2. 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;
3. Require or results in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects;
4. Have insufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new and expanded entitlements needed;
5. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider, which serves or may serve the project, that it has inadequate capacity to serve the projects projected demand in addition to the providers existing commitments;
6. Be served by a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs;
7. Not comply with federal state and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste.

Issue 3 above is addressed within Chapter 3.4, Hydrology and Water Quality, and is therefore not analyzed below.

3.9.2.1 Issue 1: Wastewater Treatment Requirements

Analysis

The proposed project's construction, mining operations, and reclamation activities are not expected to generate wastewater requiring treatment onsite. All

construction workers and mining employees would use onsite portable restrooms that would store wastewater in holding tanks. The portable restrooms would be regularly cleaned and wastewater would be routinely collected and disposed of at a sanitary sewer offsite per County requirements. The project site is not located within the service area of a wastewater treatment provider; the certified portable toilet waste hauler commissioned by the proposed project would be required to dispose of waste to an approved wastewater treatment facility per County requirements. The sand and aggregate material being excavated onsite would not be toxic to surface waters, and surface water onsite is not expected to require treatment prior to leaving the site. Excess wash fines would be stored in settling basins for collection and would be incorporated into the project site in areas to be reclaimed. Isolating wash fines in these settling basins would prevent any mining-generated turbid water from running offsite and mixing with other surface waters, thereby eliminating the need for wastewater treatment. No other wastewater would be generated onsite requiring treatment. Therefore, this impact is considered **less than significant**.

3.9.2.2 Issue 2: Water or Wastewater Treatment Facility Construction or Expansion

Analysis

The minimal amounts of wastewater generated onsite by construction worker and employee use of portable restrooms would be appropriately disposed of and treated offsite per County requirements. The sand and aggregate material being excavated onsite would not be toxic to surface waters, and surface water onsite is not expected to require treatment prior to leaving the site. In addition, wash fines would be isolated in settling basins, preventing any mining-generated turbid water from running offsite and mixing with other surface waters, thereby eliminating the need for wastewater treatment. Additionally, the proposed project would not require the construction of new or expansion of water or wastewater treatment facilities. Therefore, this impact is considered **less than significant**.

3.9.2.3 Issue 4 and 5: Water and Wastewater Treatment Providers

Analysis

At a maximum, the proposed mining operations would have a water demand of approximately 100 acre-feet per year (summed from 68 acre-feet for mining production, 20 acre-feet for dust suppression, and 12 acre-feet for irrigation of the landscaped earthen berm near the entrance, visual screening along El Monte Road, and for supplemental water on revegetated areas).

LWD is expected to be the local utility service provider that supplies the proposed project with water. As demonstrated above in Section 3.9.1 and Table 3.9-1, and based on the project-specific Water Supply Availability Form PDS-399W, overall LWD supplies would meet the projected demand (San Diego County 2017).

Further, the minimal amounts of wastewater generated onsite by construction worker and employee use of portable restrooms would be appropriately disposed of offsite at an offsite sanitary sewer facility per County requirements. Therefore, impacts relating to the exceedance of existing water or wastewater treatment provider capacities would be **less than significant**.

3.9.2.4 Issue 6: Landfill Service

Analysis

The proposed mining and reclamation activities would generate waste, which would be minimized through the proposed project's compliance with the County's Construction and Demolition Debris Deposit Ordinance requiring the diversion of 50 percent of construction debris. During operation of the proposed mining activities, a total of approximately 12.5 million tons of sand and gravel would be extracted; however, the proposed mining activities would not produce waste material. All materials produced would be sold, used as onsite fill material, or incorporated into the surface as a soil media. No tailings or waste piles would remain onsite following the completion of extractive operations. The minimal amount of domestic waste produced on the project site by mining operation employees would be collected in trash bins and removed by a local refuse disposal company. Any waste generated at the project site would be disposed of at the Sycamore Landfill (which had half of its capacity remaining as of 2014), and would have the capacity to serve the proposed project's solid waste disposal needs. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

3.9.2.5 Issue 7: Solid Waste Regulations

Analysis

The proposed project would comply with federal, State, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Construction activities would comply with the County ordinance for waste diversion and all material extracted during mining operations would be sold, used for bench construction, or used for onsite fill material. Domestic refuse generated onsite would be removed and disposed of offsite in accordance with waste disposal regulations. Therefore, impacts would be **less than significant**.

3.9.3 Cumulative Impact Analysis

As described above within Section 3.9.2, Issue 3 is addressed within Chapter 3.4, Hydrology and Water Quality, and is therefore not analyzed below.

Issue 1: Wastewater Treatment Requirements

The proposed project, in conjunction with all cumulative projects, would be required to comply with all local and State regulations. Compliance with these regulations would ensure that neither the proposed project nor cumulative

projects would result in a violation of wastewater treatment requirements. Therefore, in conjunction with the proposed project, impacts **would not be considered cumulatively considerable**.

Issue 2: Water or Wastewater Treatment Facility Construction or Expansion

Cumulative projects listed in Table 1-11, which consists largely of residential developments, would result in the need for water or result in additional wastewater, which could result in a cumulative increase in demand for water or wastewater treatment facilities. However, as analyzed above under direct impacts, the proposed project would generate minimal wastewater. In addition, based on the project-specific Water Supply Availability Form PDS-399W, overall LWD supplies would meet the projected water demand and would not require the construction of new or expansion of water or wastewater treatment facilities (San Diego County 2017). Therefore, **the proposed project's contribution to the need for water or wastewater treatment would not be cumulatively considerable**.

Issue 4 and 5: Water and Wastewater Treatment Providers

The cumulative projects would likely obtain their water supplies from LWD. Since the cumulative projects listed in Table 1-11 are mostly residential and commercial, at least a portion of them are likely accommodated for in the demand projections published by LWD, which anticipate a certain amount of population growth and development. LWD anticipates meeting projected demand through the year 2035. Based on the project-specific Water Supply Availability Form PDS-399W, LWD would have sufficient supplies to provide the proposed project with water (San Diego County 2017). Therefore, in conjunction with the proposed project, impacts to water suppliers **would not be considered cumulatively considerable**.

Other projects within LWD's service area could result in a cumulative increase in demand for wastewater services and treatment facilities. The nearest wastewater treatment provider to the project site is the City of San Diego, which anticipates a certain amount of population growth and development. The City, as the provider of wastewater facilities, would confirm the availability of adequate wastewater treatment capacity prior to future project approval. Additionally, the proposed project would not generate a need for wastewater collection outside of the use of portable restrooms and would not cumulatively contribute to the need for wastewater treatment providers. Therefore, the proposed project's contribution to the need for wastewater treatment **would not be cumulatively considerable**.

Issue 6: Landfill Service

The proposed project, in conjunction with all cumulative projects, would contribute to an increase in solid waste generation. However, each project would

be required to comply with local and state regulations including identifying a local landfill with available capacity. The Sycamore Landfill is expected to be able to accommodate the proposed project's minimal generation of domestic waste as it is well beneath maximum capacity. Therefore, the project's contribution to a potential cumulative impact associated with landfill service **would not be cumulatively considerable.**

Issue 7: Solid Waste Regulations

The proposed project and all other cumulative projects would be required to comply with all federal, State, and local regulations pertaining to solid waste. Therefore, **no cumulative impact is anticipated to** occur with respect to compliance with solid waste regulations.

3.9.4 Significance of Impacts Prior to Mitigation

As discussed above, no significant direct or cumulative impacts related to utilities and service systems would result from the proposed project. Thus, no mitigation is required.

3.9.5 Conclusion

The proposed project's construction, mining operations, and reclamation activities are expected to require minimal water supply and wastewater treatment. Therefore, impacts to water supply and wastewater treatment facilities would be less than significant. In addition, any waste generated at the project site would be disposed of at a nearby landfill with remaining capacity. Therefore, impacts related to solid waste disposal would be less than significant. The proposed project would be required to comply with all federal, state, and local regulations pertaining to solid waste, and therefore impacts related to solid waste regulations would be less than significant.

Table 3.9-1: Current and Projected Water Supplies and Demand (acre-feet/year)

	2020	2025	2030	2035
Total Projected Supply	4,205	4,730	4,919	4,966
Total Projected Demand	4,138	4,703	4,869	4,925

SOURCE: LWD 2015.

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