

3.2.2 Mineral Resources

Numerous mineral resources and mineral resource extraction sites are found throughout the project area in the County of San Diego (County). The region's mineral resources are classified according to three categories important to the County: construction materials, industrial and chemical mineral materials, and, metallic and rare minerals. A significant impact would occur if the proposed project results in the loss of a known or locally important mineral resource.

3.2.2.1 *Analysis of Project Effects*

Tier One and Tier Two

Equine uses allowed under Tier One and Tier Two may be located within a region where geologic information indicates significant mineral deposits are present as identified on the County's Mineral Resources Map. These facilities may be located on land that has any of the following Mineral Land Classifications, as identified in the Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Western San Diego Production-Consumption Region (DOC 1997): Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ)-1, which is land located within an area where geologic information indicates no significant mineral deposits are present; MRZ-2, which is an area of "Identified Mineral Resource Significance"; or MRZ-3, which is an area of undetermined mineral resources.

A worst-case ground-disturbance scenario was developed for the Tier One equine uses that would allow boarding of up to three horses not owned by the property owner without a ministerial or discretionary permit, and Tier Two equine uses that allow 10 horses per acre of usable area, up to 50 horses and 5 acres with a Zoning Verification Permit. Therefore, future equine uses within Tier One and Tier Two would not be subject to the County's discretionary environmental review (CEQA). The worst-case ground-disturbance scenario is based on the assumptions described in Section 1.4.2 which includes the assumption that all qualifying property that is 5 acres or less is completely built out, and property over 5 acres only disturbs 5 acres as limited by Tier Two. Under this scenario, the maximum ground disturbance for the entire County under Tier One and Tier Two would be a total of 113,941 acres.

Tier One and Tier Two uses developed under the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment could result in an increase in equine facilities as well as related infrastructure including driveways, fences, parking lots, and accessory buildings that may require earthwork activities consisting of minor grading to level the surface for construction. However, due to the maximum development potential of 5 acres, individual projects under the Tier One and Tier Two of the proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment are not anticipated to result in the future inaccessibility for recovery of any potential on-site mineral resources. Additionally, equine facilities that result from Tier One

and Tier Two equine uses would not involve large areas of grading, or development that could result in the loss of a significant mineral resource. Analysis of existing facilities shows that equine facilities do not substantially alter land forms in the way a mineral resource extraction facility would and mineral resources would remain available beneath horse facilities. Therefore, no potentially significant loss of availability of a known mineral resource of value to the region and the residents of the state will occur as a result of this project.

Under Tier One and Tier Two respectively, commercial horse stable uses would be allowed without a permit or with a ministerial Zoning Verification Permit, where an MUP may have previously been required. However, the proposed project would not allow commercial horse stable uses in areas where they were previously not allowed, as these areas would continue to not allow a horse stable. Additionally, quarries and other extraction operation sites would not be locations for future equine uses under Tier One and Tier Two. Therefore, implementation of Tiers One and Two of the proposed project would not adversely affect the availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region or the state, or result in the loss of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Impacts to mineral resources related to Tier One and Tier Two equine uses would be **less than significant**.

Tier Three and Tier Four

The proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendment would create a tiered permitting system for commercial horse stables that would allow 10 horses per acre of usable area up to 100 horses and 10 acres for Tier Three, as well as allow over 100 horses and more than 10 acres of usable area under Tier Four. All future Tier Three and Tier Four equine uses will be subject to discretionary review and required to obtain an Administrative Permit or an MUP, respectively. As part of the County's discretionary review process, all future projects would be evaluated under CEQA and would be required to implement measures to minimize impacts to mineral resources, as necessary. CEQA requires proposed projects to provide detailed information on the potentially significant environmental effects they are likely to have, list ways in which the significant environmental effects would be minimized, possibly identify alternatives that would reduce or avoid the significant impacts identified for the project, and proposed mitigation for significant impacts.

Additionally, if a future Tier Three and Tier Four equine uses are located near or within an area that contains mineral resources, a mineral resources technical report may be required at the discretion of the County. The technical report would assess the site-specific conditions and include mitigation measures, as necessary. Therefore, due to the Administrative Permit and MUP discretionary review processes required for all future Tier Three and Tier Four equine uses, respectively, the project would result in **less-than-significant** impacts to mineral resources.

3.2.2.2 *Cumulative Impact Analysis*

Cumulative impacts to mineral resources may result from the loss of a known or locally important mineral resource. The geographic scope for this cumulative analysis is the San Diego region, which encompasses the entire County, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas, as well as surrounding counties, and tribal and public agency lands. The California Geological Survey has classified land into MRZs in Riverside County, Orange County, the incorporated cities in the County of San Diego, as well as for the unincorporated County of San Diego. These adjacent jurisdictions have included protections in their general plans or other planning documents to protect these and other mineral resources.

Planned and projected growth in the region, however, may result in a reasonably foreseeable loss of mineral resources due to the encroachment of incompatible uses that would limit future areas from being permitted for mining operations. For example, the Merriam Mountains General Plan Amendment in the Bonsall Community Planning Area (CPA), which is included in the cumulative project list in Table 1-5a, Private Project Not Included in the General Plan Update, is a private project that proposes over 2,000 dwelling units in an area that has been classified as containing known mineral resources (MRZ-2). The development of this residential project would preclude the extraction of mineral resources on this site. It is reasonably foreseeable that other cumulative projects in the region may also result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources. Therefore, cumulative projects in the region would have the potential to result in a significant cumulative impact associated with mineral resources.

However, as described above in Section 3.2.2.1, the proposed project **would not contribute to any existing cumulative impact** to mineral resources.

3.2.2.3 *Mitigation Measures*

The proposed project will not result in any significant impacts to mineral resources, and no mitigation measures are required.

3.2.2.4 *Conclusion*

Implementation of the proposed project would not result in significant impacts associated with mineral resources. The proposed project would not result in the loss of a known or locally important mineral resource.

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