

## **2.9 Mineral Resources**

This section of the SEIR analyzes the existing mineral resources relative to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR, including the loss of availability of a known mineral resource or the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site from the County's existing supply of mineral resources, and the potential effects that implementation of the proposed Project may have on such resources.

### **2.9.1 Existing Conditions**

The General Plan Update PEIR included a discussion of existing conditions related to mineral resources in Chapter 2.10.1 of the Mineral Resources chapter, including the Project areas covered by this proposed Project. The mineral resource conditions described in the General Plan Update PEIR are substantially the same as the conditions on the ground today. No changes to the existing conditions have been identified that would alter the conclusions in the General Plan Update PEIR. All references used in the General Plan Update PEIR (Chapter 6) were reviewed to ensure they are still valid today. As of January 2015 the number of active and idle mines within the unincorporated County is 17 (15 active; two idle) which is the same number identified in the General Plan Update PEIR. Some names of the mining operations have been changed due to ownership changes. In addition, the existing conditions for mineral resources within the Project area analyzed in this SEIR are the same as those provided in the General Plan Update PEIR. As a result, the conclusions of the General Plan Update PEIR are hereby incorporated by reference.

As described in Section 2.10.1.6 of the General Plan Update PEIR, approximately the western one-third of the County has been classified into distinct Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs), which identify the known or inferred mineral resource potential of individual lands, according to the California Geological Survey (CGS); refer to Figure 2.9-1A and Figure 2.9-1B, San Diego County Mineral Resource Zones. Lands classified as MRZs relative to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR occur within portions of Alpine CPA, Ramona CPA, and Jamul/Dulzura Subregion.

### **2.9.2 Regulatory Framework**

Chapter 2.10 of the General Plan Update PEIR, pages 2.10-12 through 2.10-13 describe the Regulatory Framework related to mineral resources and is hereby incorporated by reference. There are no applicable Federal regulations, authorities, or administering agencies pertaining to mineral resources that regulate the proposed Project. Applicable State regulations include: Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975; and Integrated Waste Management Act. Applicable Local regulations include: San Diego County Zoning Ordinance, Sections 2820-2835, S82 Extractive Use Regulations; Ordinance, Sections 6550-6556, Extractive Use Regulations; and Ordinances Section 87.701-87.714, Surface Mining.

The regulatory framework discussion in the General Plan Update PEIR pertaining to minerals has not changed since adoption of the General Plan in August 2011. Therefore, the regulatory framework identified in the General Plan Update PEIR applies to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR, and is therefore incorporated by reference and not repeated in this SEIR.

### **2.9.3 Analysis of Project Effects and Cumulative Impacts**

The cumulative impact analysis study area for mineral resources in the General Plan Update PEIR was identified as the entire San Diego Region (Chapter 2.10). As the proposed Project is applying 2011 General Plan principles to assign land use designations for the Project areas throughout the unincorporated area, the cumulative study area for mineral resources is the same as the General Plan Update PEIR and is hereby incorporated by reference. In addition, Section 1.9 of this SEIR (Cumulative Project Assessment Overview), provides an update of new projects since adoption of the 2011 General Plan that are considered in the cumulative analysis in order to make the analysis complete.

#### **2.9.3.1 Mineral Resource Availability**

This section describes potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on mineral resource availability, as pertains to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR.

#### **Guidelines for the Determination of Significance**

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project would have a significant impact if it results in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource as designated by the CGS that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State, such as proposing incompatible development:

- On or within the vicinity (generally up to 1,300 feet from the site) of an area classified as MRZ-2;
- On land classified as MRZ-3;
- On land underlain by Quaternary alluvium; or,
- On or within the vicinity of areas containing industrial material and gemstone resources.

#### **Analysis**

The General Plan Update PEIR evaluated impacts from the adoption of the goals and policies of the 2011 General Plan countywide, including FCI lands. In addition, the General Plan Update PEIR evaluated buildout of the land use designations applied throughout the unincorporated area with the exception of former FCI lands. The General Plan Update PEIR determined that buildout under the 2011 General Plan would result in the following potentially significant direct, indirect and cumulative impacts:

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1. Loss of availability of known or suspected mineral resources in areas designated MRZ-2 or MRZ-3, or in areas underlain by Quaternary alluvium, that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State.
2. Planned and projected growth in the region that would result in a reasonably foreseeable loss of mineral resources due to the encroachment of incompatible uses limiting future areas from being permitted for mining operations.
3. Potentially incompatible land uses in areas that are known or likely to contain other industrial materials or gemstone mineral resources.
4. Growth or land uses that are incompatible with mining and resource recovery, thereby contributing to a cumulative loss of available resources on a regional level.

These impacts would be reduced through the implementation of a combination of federal, State, and local regulations; existing County regulatory processes; the adopted 2011 General Plan goals and policies; and, specific mitigation measures and implementation programs identified in the General Plan Update PEIR; however, impacts would not be reduced to below a level of significance because the full suite of these and other mitigation measures considered and addressed in the General Plan Update PEIR were found to be infeasible by the County for the reasons given in Section 2.10.6.1 of that EIR (and in Section 2.9.4.1 below).

Similar direct, indirect and cumulative effects would occur with future development of the Project areas addressed in this SEIR located on lands classified as MRZ-2 and MRZ-3. As shown in Table 2.9-1 and Figures 2.9-1A and 2.9-1B a total of 46.2 acres of lands classified as MRZ-2 would be located within future development of former FCI lands within the Alpine CPA, Ramona CPA, and North Mountain CPA. Similar direct, indirect, and cumulative effects would also occur with future development of the Project areas on lands classified as MRZ-3 or underlain by Quaternary alluvium, including portions of Alpine CPA, Ramona CPA, and Jamul/Dulzura Subregion (see Table 2.9-1 and Table 2.9-2); refer to Figure 2.9-1A and Figure 2.9-1B, San Diego County Mineral Resource Zones. The primary adverse effect to mineral resources in San Diego County is the loss of their availability by the placement of incompatible land uses, which either directly or indirectly make the resource inaccessible for future extraction. Mining operations require an adequate setback from these land uses due to the variety of environmental issues associated with mining, which include, but are not limited to, noise, traffic, air quality, and visual resources impacts. While the Project areas are proposed for lower intensity development than the western portion of the County, residential uses are proposed in these areas that would reduce the availability of mineral resources and result in a potentially significant impact.

Such impacts would also be cumulative in nature as they would contribute to a cumulative loss of available resources on a regional level, when combined with other development allowed under the 2011 General Plan. Urbanization and growth in the jurisdictions adjacent to the unincorporated County would have the potential to result in land uses that are incompatible with

mining and resource recovery and would result in a cumulative loss of available resources. Planned and projected growth in the region would 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. Therefore, a significant cumulative impact to mineral resource availability would occur.

The potential effects on mineral resources availability resulting from implementation of the proposed Project would be reduced by the same regulations, implementation programs (2011 General Plan goals/policies) and mitigation measures from the General Plan Update PEIR and repeated in Section 2.9.4.1 (Mitigation for Mineral Resource Availability) below; however, even with implementation of these regulations, programs and measures, proposed Project impacts on mineral resources availability would not be reduced to below a level of significance for the reasons stated above; specifically, the full suite of these and other mitigation measures considered and addressed in the General Plan Update PEIR were found to be infeasible.

### **2.9.3.2 Mineral Resource Recovery Sites**

This section describes potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts on mineral resource recovery sites, as pertains to the Project areas addressed in this SEIR.

#### **Guidelines for the Determination of Significance**

Based on Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, the proposed Project would have a significant impact if it results 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. Resource recovery sites are those areas where mineral resources could be extracted for use. Locally important resource recovery sites, or areas where important resource recovery sites could potentially be located, are designated by the CGS as MRZ-2 or MRZ-3, or as being underlain by Quaternary alluvium.

#### **Analysis**

The General Plan Update PEIR evaluated impacts from the adoption of the goals and policies of the 2011 General Plan countywide, including FCI lands. In addition, the General Plan Update PEIR evaluated buildout of the land use designations applied throughout the unincorporated area with the exception of former FCI lands. The General Plan Update PEIR determined that buildout under the 2011 General Plan would result in the following potentially significant direct, indirect and cumulative impacts:

1. Planned and projected growth in the region that would result in encroachment of incompatible uses into areas where mines are active, or where future resource recovery sites would have otherwise been permitted, thereby precluding the extraction of mineral resources and limiting future areas from being permitted for mining operations.

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2. Land uses that would be incompatible with mining and resource recovery operations in areas designated MRZ-2 or MRZ-3, or in areas underlain by Quaternary alluvium that contain or potentially contain important aggregate resources.
3. Growth or land uses that are incompatible with locally important mineral resource recovery sites, thereby contributing to a cumulative loss of available resources on a regional level.

These impacts would be reduced through the implementation of a combination of federal, State, and local regulations; existing County regulatory processes; the 2011 General Plan goals and policies; and, specific mitigation measures and implementation programs identified in the General Plan Update PEIR; however, impacts would not be reduced to below a level of significance because the full suite of these and other mitigation measures considered and addressed in the General Plan Update PEIR were found to be infeasible by the County for the reasons given in Section 2.10.6.1 of that EIR (and in Section 2.9.4.1 below).

Similar direct, indirect and cumulative effects would occur with future development of the Project areas addressed in this SEIR that are located near existing mineral resource recovery sites, including portions of Alpine CPA, Ramona CPA, and Jamul/Dulzura Subregion. The Project proposes potentially incompatible land uses in areas that are known or likely to contain other industrial materials or gemstone mineral resources. The development of incompatible land uses would preclude the extraction of mineral resources, thus resulting in a potentially significant impact with regard to the loss of availability of mineral resource recovery sites. As of January 2015 the number of active and idle mines within the unincorporated County is 17 (15 active; two idle) which is the same number identified in the General Plan Update PEIR (see Table 2.9-3).

Such impacts would also be cumulative in nature as they would contribute to a cumulative loss of available resources on a regional level, when combined with other development allowed under the 2011 General Plan. Projected growth in the region would result in a reasonably foreseeable loss of mineral resource recovery sites due to the encroachment of incompatible uses that would preclude the extraction of mineral resources. It is reasonably foreseeable that other cumulative projects in the region would also result in the loss of availability of known mineral resources. Therefore, a significant cumulative impact to mineral resource recovery sites would occur.

The potential effects on locally important mineral resource recovery sites resulting from implementation of the proposed Project would be reduced by the same regulations, implementation programs (2011 General Plan goals/policies) and mitigation measures from the General Plan Update PEIR and repeated in Section 2.9.4.1 (Mitigation for Mineral Resource Availability) below; however, even with implementation of these regulations, programs and measures, proposed Project impacts on locally important mineral resource recovery sites would not be reduced to below a level of significance for the same reasons stated above; specifically, the full suite of these and other mitigation measures considered and addressed in the General Plan Update PEIR were found to be infeasible.

## **2.9.4 Mitigation**

### **2.9.4.1 Mineral Resource Availability**

Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to mineral resource availability associated with the proposed Project would be reduced with implementation of the same applicable 2011 General Plan policies and mitigation measures as identified in the General Plan Update PEIR and repeated below; however, the County determined that implementation of the measures listed below would be infeasible for the following reasons:

- Prohibit incompatible uses that would be located on or near significant mineral resource sites. This measure would result in restrictions on future development in areas identified for increased growth in the 2011 General Plan because significant or potentially significant mineral resources sites have been identified throughout the western portion of the unincorporated County, where the majority of development under the 2011 General Plan would take place. Thus, this measure would conflict with the goal of the Housing Element to provide sufficient housing stock.
- For projects that propose incompatible uses near significant mineral resource sites, require the applicants to mine the site prior to project development. This measure would result in undue hardship on the entitlement process as extraction activities often take decades to complete and may make the site unusable for the proposed land use. In some cases, incompatible land uses may already exist in the vicinity of the mineral resource site that would make extraction at the site infeasible.
- Use public funds to initiate new mineral extraction operations. This measure would require voter or BOS approval to appropriate funds toward mineral extraction operations, which cannot be guaranteed. Moreover, this would initiate extraction sites in many areas of the County, which would potentially result in numerous environmental impacts, and conflict with the Project objective to minimize public costs of infrastructure and services.

Because the measures listed above have been found to be infeasible by the County and would not be implemented, impacts would remain significant and unavoidable.

### **2011 General Plan Policies**

**Policy COS-10.1: Siting of Development.** Encourage the conservation (i.e., protection from incompatible land uses) of areas designated as having substantial potential for mineral extraction. Discourage development that would substantially preclude the future development of mining facilities in these areas. Design development or uses to minimize the potential conflict with existing or potential future mining facilities. For purposes of this policy, incompatible land uses are defined by the Surface mining and Recovery Act (SMARA) Section 3675.

**Policy COS-10.2: Protection of State-Classified or Designated Lands.** Discourage development or the establishment of other incompatible land uses on or adjacent to areas

classified or designated by the State of California as having important mineral resources (MRZ-2), as well as potential mineral lands identified by other government agencies. The potential for the extraction of substantial mineral resources from lands classified by the State of California as areas that contain mineral resources (MRZ-3) shall be considered by the County in making land use decisions.

**Policy COS-10.3: Road Access.** Prohibit development from restricting road access to existing mining facilities, areas classified MRZ-2 or MRZ-3 by the State Geologist, or areas identified in the County Zoning Ordinance for potential extractive use in accordance with SMARA Section 2764.a.

**Policy COS-10.4: Compatible Land Uses.** Discourage the development of land uses that are not compatible with the retention of mining or recreational access to non-aggregate mineral deposits.

**Policy COS-10.6: Conservation of Construction Aggregate.** Encourage the continued operation of existing mining facilities and streamline the permitting of new mining facilities consistent with the goal to establish permitted aggregate resources that are sufficient to satisfy 50 years of County demand.

**Policy COS-10.8: New Mining Facilities.** Develop specific permit types and procedures for the authorization of new mining facilities that recognize the inherent physical effects of mining operations and the public necessity for available mineral resources adequate to meet local demand, in accordance with PRC Section 2762.

**Policy COS-10.9: Overlay Zones.** Provide zoning overlays for MRZ-2 designated lands and a 1,500 foot wide buffer area adjacent to such lands. Within these overlay zones, the potential effects of proposed land use actions on potential future extraction of mineral resources shall be considered by the decision-makers.

These policies facilitate protection of mineral resource areas from incompatible land uses, require that road access to mining facilities be maintained, and provide for special (less-time consuming) permitting of mining operations. Adherence to these policies will further reduce impacts associated with mineral resource availability.

### Mitigation Measures

**Min-1.1** Assess the impact of new development on mineral resources as required by the County Guidelines for Determining Significance for Mineral Resources. Update the CEQA Guidelines for Determining Significance (Mineral Resources) to include the requirement to evaluate whether access is being maintained to existing mining sites.

**Min-1.2** Revise and update the County ordinances to designate areas of known importance for mineral resources as follows:

- Update the Zoning Ordinance with the addition of a Mining Compatibility Designator or Overlay that identifies parcels with a high potential for mineral resources. The purpose is to take into account the potential mineral resources not to preclude the potential mining use. In addition, specify that notification of potential mining use is provided to all parcels within a 1,500 foot radius of parcels with a Mining Compatibility Designator/Overlay.
- Revise the Zoning Ordinance to facilitate recycling of salvaged concrete, asphalt, and rock at permitted mining facilities.
- Revise the Zoning Ordinance and Grading Ordinance to authorize surface mining operations with a Surface Mining Permit rather than a MUP. Incorporate findings of approval that reflect Mineral Compatibility Designator, SMARA Sections 2762 and 2763, and the inherent nature of surface mining operations. Parcels with a high potential for mineral resources could include those areas designated as MRZ-2 or other areas identified as containing mineral resources that are located where a sufficient buffer is available so that extraction activities are feasible.

**Min-1.3** Request that the State Geologist identify mineral resources in previously unmapped areas of East and North County.

Min-1.1 will ensure that known mineral resource areas are considered during future planning and development. Min-1.2 will allow better protection of known valuable mineral resource areas from incompatible uses. Min-1.3 will provide the County with more opportunity to make areas available for mineral extraction.

#### **2.9.4.2 *Mineral Resources Recovery Sites***

Direct, indirect and cumulative impacts to mineral resources recovery sites associated with the proposed Project would be reduced with implementation of the same applicable 2011 General Plan policies and mitigation measures as identified in the General Plan Update PEIR and repeated in Section 2.9.4.1, above; however, the County determined that impacts would not be reduced to below a level of significance.

Min-1.1 will ensure that known mineral resource areas are considered during future planning and development. Min-1.2 will allow better protection of known mineral resource recovery sites from incompatible uses. Min-1.3 will provide the County with more opportunity to make areas available for mineral extraction.

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**TABLE 2.9-1. PROPOSED LAND USES IN DESIGNATED MRZ AREA**

	Proposed Project	
	MRZ-2	MRZ-3
Village Residential	0.0	15.5
Semi-Rural Residential	0.0	236.0
Rural Lands	46.2	90.3
Specific Plan Area	0.0	0.0
Rural Commercial	0.0	21.9
Industrial	0.0	0.0
Village Core Mixed Use	0.0	0.0
Public/Semi-Public & Recreational Open Space	0.0	0.0
Public Agency Lands	0.0	0.0
Tribal Lands	0.0	0.0
Open Space (Conservation)	0.0	0.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46.2</b>	<b>363.7</b>

Source: County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services, 2014.

**TABLE 2.9-2 PROPOSED LAND USES IN AREAS WITH QUATERNARY ALLUVIUM BY CPA**

CPA	Land Use	Acres
Alpine	Village Core Mixed Use	0.7
	<b><i>Alpine Total</i></b>	<b><i>0.7</i></b>
Descanso	Rural Lands	8.9
	Semi-rural Residential	69.6
	Village Residential	6.8
	<b><i>Descanso Total</i></b>	<b><i>85.4</i></b>
Julian	Public Agency Lands	0.2
	Rural Lands	665.8
	Semi-rural Residential	22.5
	<b><i>Julian Total</i></b>	<b><i>688.5</i></b>
Lake Morena / Campo	Rural Lands	537.1
	<b><i>Lake Morena / Campo Total</i></b>	<b><i>537.1</i></b>
Palomar Mountain	Rural Lands	93.7
	<b><i>Palomar Mountain Total</i></b>	<b><i>93.7</i></b>
Pine Valley	Public Agency Lands	55.06
	Rural Lands	1,987.5
	<b><i>Pine Valley Total</i></b>	<b><i>2042.59</i></b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>3448.06</b>

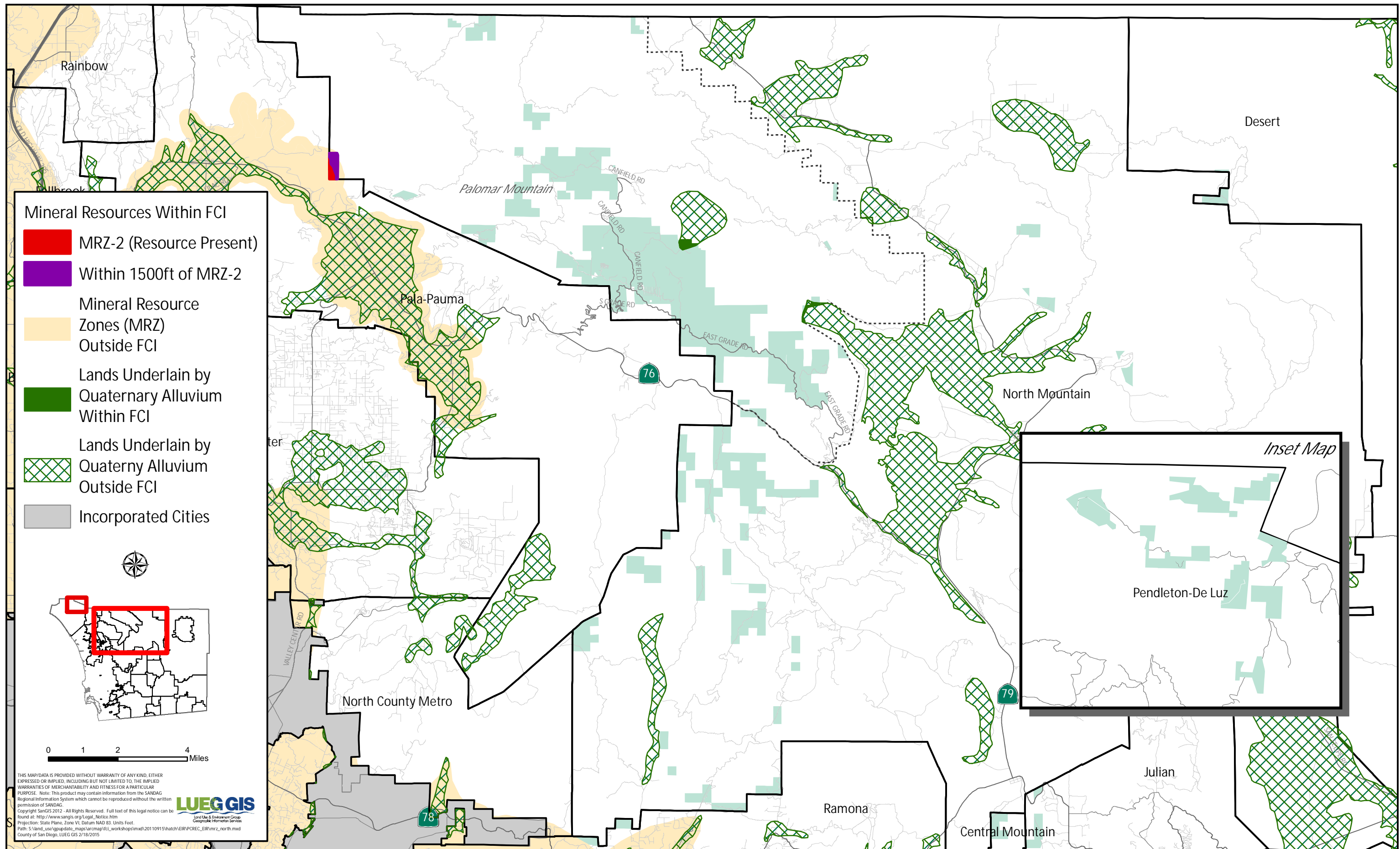
Source: County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services, 2014.

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**TABLE 2.9-3 MINES WITHIN PROJECT AREA**

<b>Quarry Name (Mine Operator)</b>	<b>Type of Activity</b>	<b>Planning Area</b>	<b>Notes/Area Being Mined</b>
Baxter Quarry (M.J. Baxter Drilling Company)	Mining (Blasting)	Lakeside	Active. Approximately 31 acres.
Buckman Springs Borrow Pit (County of San Diego, DPW)	Pit	Mountain Empire	Active. Approximately 12 acres.
Channel Road (Hansen Aggregates PSW, Inc.)	Mining	Lakeside	Active. Approximately 12 acres.
T.T.T. Quarry (Superior Ready Mix Concrete)	Mining (Blasting)	Lakeside	Active. Approximately 35 acres.
Enniss Enterprises, Inc. (Enniss Enterprises, Inc.)	Mining	Lakeside	Active. Approximately 65 acres.
Hester's Granite (Hansen Aggregates PSW, Inc.)	Mining (Blasting)	Crest/Dehesa	Active. Approximately 94 acres.
Highway 67 (Pit 12) (Hansen Aggregates PSW, Inc.)	Mining (Blasting)	Lakeside	Idle. Approximately 180 acres.
Jamacha Quarry (Superior Ready Mix)	Mining (Blasting)	Valle de Oro	Active. Approximately 64 acres.
Inland Valley Materials (Granite Construction Company)	Mining	North County Metro	Active. Approximately 11 acres.
Warner Borrow Pit (County of San Diego, DPW)	Pit	North Mountain	Active. Approximately 4 acres.
Lakeside Sand Pit (Superior Ready Mix)	Pit	Lakeside	Idle. Approximately 2 acres.
Twin Oaks Quarry (Superior Ready Mix)	Pit (Blasting)	Desert	Active. Approximately 35 acres.
Rosemary's Mountain (Granite Construction, Inc.)	Mining (Blasting)	Pala	Active. Approximately 35 acres.
Slaughterhouse Canyon/Asphalt Inc. (Hansen Aggregates PSW, Inc.)	Mining	Lakeside	Idle. Approximately 140 acres.
Tunnel Hill (C.W. McGrath, Inc.)	Pit	Lakeside	Idle. Approximately 14 acres.
JEB Sand & Gravel	Pit	Escondido	Active. Approximately 14 acres.
Turvey Pit	Pit	Alpine	Active. Approximately 10 acres.

Source: County of San Diego, Planning & Development Services, 2015.



Source: SanGIS, County of San Diego, 2014

San Diego County Mineral Resource Zones – North

Figure 2.9-1A

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