

IV.K MINERAL RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

This section addresses the potential impacts of the proposed project on mineral resources. The analysis describes the existing physical conditions of the Specific Plan area and the regulatory setting as it relates to mineral resources. Impacts to mineral resources are addressed in terms of whether the implementation of the proposed project would result in the permanent loss of or loss of access to any such mineral resources occurring within the Specific Plan area.

ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

In 1979, the California State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB) adopted guidelines for the management of mineral resources and preparation of local plans. The guidelines require local general plans to reference the State-identified mineral deposits and sites that are identified by the State geologist for conservation and/or future mineral extraction. Subsequently, the SMGB identified urbanized areas where irreversible land uses precluded mineral extraction.

While the majority of the Specific Plan area is within the Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan Area of the City of Los Angeles, approximately 41.74 acres of the Specific Plan area are currently within unincorporated Los Angeles County. Mineral resource sites within the City and County of Los Angeles have been classified by the State geologist as Mineral Resources Zone (MRZ), according to the known or inferred mineral potential of such sites. MRZ sites contain potentially significant sand and gravel deposits which are to be conserved. Any proposed development plan must consider access to the deposits for purposes of extraction. According to the City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework EIR, no portion of the Specific Plan area contains MRZ sites.¹ Similarly, no portion of the Specific Plan area currently within unincorporated Los Angeles County contains MRZ sites.²

Additionally, the Los Angeles Basin is known to be a source of petroleum. Most of the petroleum is from the Lower Pliocene (three to five million years old) and from the Upper Miocene (five to 11 million years old) rock formations. The Specific Plan area is not located within an “O” (Oil Drilling) District, City-designated Oil Drilling/Surface Mining Supplemental Use District, or City-designated Oil Field/Drilling Area.³ Similarly, no portion of the Specific Plan area currently within unincorporated Los Angeles County contains oil or gas resources.⁴

Regulatory Framework

California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA). The California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA, Public Resources Code Section 2710 et seq.; subsequently amended) is the primary regulator of on-shore surface mining in the State. It delegates specific regulatory authority to local jurisdictions. SMARA requires the State geologist (Division of Mines and Geology) to identify all mineral deposits within the State and to classify them as: (1) containing little or no mineral deposits, (2) significant deposits or (3) deposits identified but further evaluation needed. Local jurisdictions are required to enact specific plan procedures to guide mineral conservation and extraction at

¹City of Los Angeles, *City of Los Angeles General Plan Framework EIR*, Figures GS-1 and GS-6.

²County of Los Angeles 2008 Draft General Plan, Conservation and Open Space Element, Figure 6.5 L.A. County Natural Resource Areas.

³City of Los Angeles, *City of Los Angeles General Plan Conservation Element*, Mineral Resources Exhibit A, September 2001.

⁴County of Los Angeles 2008 Draft General Plan, *Conservation and Open Space Element*, Figure 6.5 L.A. County Natural Resource Areas.

particular sites and to incorporate mineral resource management policies into their general plans. A particular concern of the State legislators in enacting SMARA was premature loss of minerals and protection of sites threatened by development practices which might preclude future mineral extraction. Much of Los Angeles was deemed urbanized and, therefore, exempt from SMARA.

City of Los Angeles General Plan Conservation Element. The City of Los Angeles General Plan provides growth and development policies by providing a comprehensive long-range view of the City as a whole. The Conservation Element of the General Plan consists of an identification and analysis of the existing natural resources in the City of Los Angeles. Policies of the Conservation Element include the preservation of mineral resources and of the access to these resources. Much of the area within the MRZ sites in Los Angeles was developed with structures prior to the MRZ classification and, therefore, is unavailable for extraction.

City of Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC). To comply with SMARA, the City of Los Angeles adopted (1975) the 'G' Surface Mining supplemental use provisions (LAMC Section 13.03). Subsequent amendments have brought the City's provisions into consistency with new state requirements. The 'G' provisions are land use, not mineral conservation regulations. They regulate the establishment of sand and gravel districts, extraction operations, mitigation of potential noise, dust, traffic, and other potential impacts, as well as post-extraction site restoration. Other conditions may be imposed by the City if deemed appropriate.

The 'O' Oil Drilling supplemental use district provisions of the Municipal Code (Section 13.01) were initially enacted in 1953. They delineate the boundaries within which surface operations for drilling, deepening, or operation of an oil well or related facilities are permitted, subject to conditions and requirements set forth in the code and by a Department of City Planning Zoning Administrator, the Fire Department, and city's petroleum administrator of the Office of Administrative and Research Services. The conditions protect surrounding neighborhoods and the environment from potential impacts, e.g., noise, hazard, spills, and visual blight. In addition, the Department of Water and Power monitors drilling operations to assure protection of water wells and aquifers. Property owners, including the City, receive oil production royalties from lands (e.g., city streets) that lie within oil drilling districts.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Significance Thresholds

In accordance with Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines, the proposed project would have a significant impact on mineral resources if the proposed project were to:

- 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; and/or
- 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.

Project Design Features

No Project Design Features are proposed with regard to mineral resources.

Analysis of Proposed Project Impacts

The Specific Plan area is located within a highly urbanized area of Southeast Los Angeles and has been previously disturbed by development. In addition, the Specific Plan area is not located within a City- or County-designated Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) where significant mineral deposits are known to be present or within a mineral producing area as classified by the State geologist. Furthermore, the Specific Plan area is not located within a designated Oil Drilling/Surface Mining Supplemental Use District, or City-designated Oil Field/Drilling Area. No mineral or oil extraction operations occur on the Specific Plan area or in the vicinity of the proposed project. As such, the potential for mineral resources to occur on-site is low. Implementation of the proposed project would not result in the loss or non-availability of any known, regionally valuable mineral resource, and the proposed project would not result in impacts to a mineral resource recovery site. Therefore, no impacts to mineral resources would occur.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

As with the proposed project, the nine related projects that have been identified within one-mile of the Specific Plan area (shown in Table III-1 and Figure III-1 in Section III Environmental Setting of this Draft EIR) would be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that no significant impacts to mineral resources would occur. However, no City-or County-designated Mineral Resource Zones or Oil Drilling/Surface Mining areas have been identified within the Specific Plan area or in the vicinity of the proposed project. Therefore, impacts to mineral resources would not be cumulatively considerable.

MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts related to mineral resources would not occur. Therefore, mitigation measures are not necessary.

LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE AFTER MITIGATION

Impacts related to mineral resources would remain less than significant.