

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), is proposing to:

- Issue incidental take permits for 30 years consistent with the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Plan Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for the following covered species: the federally endangered San Bernardino kangaroo rat (*Dipodomys merriami parvus*, SBKR), Santa Ana River woolly-star (*Eriastrum densifolium* ssp. *sanctorum*, woolly-star), slender-horned spineflower (*Dodecahema leptoceras*, spineflower); the threatened coastal California gnatcatcher (*Polioptila californica californica*, gnatcatcher); and the cactus wren (*Campylorhynchus brunneicapillus*).

This action is the Proposed Action evaluated in this Draft Environmental Impact Statement/ Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (DEIS/SEIR) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The HCP Covered Activities are the Proposed Projects by the San Bernardino Valley Water Conservation District (Conservation District) and other local lead agencies that are evaluated in this DEIS/SEIR pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Covered Activities are activities that may result in take of listed species that are mitigated through implementation of the HCP. Covered Activities include construction and/or operation and maintenance of land or facilities associated with the following: Aggregate mining; Water conservation; Wells and water infrastructure; Transportation; Flood Control; Trails; Habitat Enhancement; and Agriculture.

Existing land uses in the HCP Area (Plan Area) consist of water conservation and storage facilities, flood control, habitat conservation, aggregate mining, agriculture, and roadways. Aggregate mining is conducted in the western half of the Plan Area, while the Conservation District maintains water spreading basins in the eastern section. The San Bernardino County Flood Control District (SBCFCD) maintains flood control facilities along the Santa Ana River, Mill Creek, Plunge Creek, and City Creek. Implementation of the HCP would offset the ground-disturbing activities of water conservation, aggregate mining, transportation improvements, recreational activities, and other public services in the Plan Area with conservation of the Covered Species. The Applicant's land supporting these species will be preserved, managed and monitored in perpetuity to serve as mitigation for the effects on covered species. The HCP has been prepared as a part of the Incidental Take Permit (ITP) applications submitted by the Conservation District and SBCFCD to the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS). A number of other entities (Task Force Members) have participated in the development of the HCP and wish to receive coverage for their planned projects. They include: the City of Redlands (including Municipal Utilities), the City of Highland, San Bernardino Valley Municipal Water District (SBVMWD), East Valley Water District (EVWD), Cemex Construction Materials Pacific, LLC (Cemex), and Robertson's Ready Mix (Robertson's).

Incidental take authorization for covered activities affecting federally listed species is being sought under Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and for incidental take of state-listed species (woolly-star and spineflower) sought under Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game Code. Take of federally listed species on BLM-administered land will be authorized through a separate but related consultation between BLM and the USFWS under Section 7 of FESA.

PURPOSE AND NEED

Purpose

The purpose of the USFWS action is to protect and conserve multiple ESA listed species and other native species; to conserve, enhance and restore the habitat and ecosystems upon which these species depend upon; and to ensure the long-term survival of these species, within the Santa Ana River Wash.

Need

USFWS' need for the proposed action is to respond to the Conservation District's application for an ITP under the authority of section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA to take certain Covered Species as a result of their proposed aggregate mining, water conservation, wells and water infrastructure, transportation, flood control, trails, habitat enhancement, and agriculture.

The Santa Ana Rivers Wash's biodiversity has diminished as urban growth has caused wildlife habitat to become more fragmented, forming isolated small blocks of land and causing endangered species conflicts. There is an urgent need to preserve remaining biodiversity without halting urban development, aggregate mining, water conservation and other uses. The federally listed endangered SBKR, and threatened gnatcatcher are known to occur within the Plan Area. The USFWS has designated portions of the Plan Area as critical habitat for SBKR.

PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES

Alternative A: No Action Alternative

In the No Action Alternative, USFWS would not issue an incidental take permit. Current mining and water conservation would continue.

Aggregate mining operations would continue producing an average of 4.0 to 4.5 million tons per year (MTPY) of aggregate materials. The total average MTPY is the average production numbers of both Cemex and Robertson's operations within the Plan Area. The existing permitted mining would be mined to completion, but no additional mining permitting is presumed.

The HCP would not be permitted. Individual projects within the Plan Area would have to be addressed independently as they are proposed. Each new project would be analyzed for CEQA and NEPA compliance. Each new project with impacts to state or federally listed species would have to obtain a

Section 10 permit or complete a Section 7 consultation, if a Federal nexus exists, in conformance and compliance with FESA and/or a 2081 permit in compliance with CESA, respectively. Other regulatory permits could be required as well.

Alternative B: Proposed Action/Projects

Under the Proposed Action/Projects alternative USFWS would issue a permit for incidental take authorization consistent with the HCP.

This alternative includes issuance of ITPs by USFWS and CDFW to the Conservation District and the SBCFCD; approval and execution of the Implementing Agreement (IA) for the HCP; and implementation of the HCP by the Permit Applicants. The HCP is intended to establish and implement a program to conserve ecologically important resources in the Plan Area. In addition to the Permittees, the following parties plan to apply to be Participating Entities under the Conservation District ITP: City of Redlands, including the Redlands Municipal Utility District; City of Highland; SBVMWD; EVWD; Cemex; and Robertson's.

While the Conservation District will be one of two ITP holders, the other being SBCFCD, only the Conservation District will have the ability to convey the permit authority to the Participating Entities under Certificates of Inclusion (COI). Each COI will be associated with a single Participating Entity and will address one or a group of Covered Activities.

The permit area for the proposed action is the Plan Area which encompasses approximately 4,892.2 acres. The HCP includes the following Covered Activities: Aggregate Mining; Water Conservation; Wells and Water Infrastructure; Transportation; Flood Control; Trails; Agriculture; and Habitat Management and Monitoring.

Alternative C: 2008 Land Management Plan

Alternative C, the 2008 Land Management Plan¹, was prepared by the Conservation District to describe the comprehensive land management strategy for the Plan Area. The 2008 Land Management Plan outlined a plan for how to coordinate and manage the present and future activities in the Wash and balance the ground-disturbing activities of aggregate mining, recreation, water conservation and other public services with preservation of quality, natural habitat for endangered, threatened, and sensitive species. Under this alternative, the District would prepare an HCP based upon the 2008 Management Plan and submit it to the Service as part of the application for an ITP.

The purpose of the Land Management Plan was to allow the continued use of land and mineral resources while maintaining the biological and hydrological resources of the planning area in an

¹ The full name of the plan is the Upper Santa Ana River Wash Land Management and Habitat Conservation Plan Document.

environmentally sensitive manner. The Land Management Plan was intended to coordinate and manage the present and future activities in the plan area, which are part of multiple jurisdictions, each with different needs. The goal was to balance the ground disturbing activities of aggregate mining, recreational activities, water conservation, and other public services with quality, natural habitat for endangered, threatened, and sensitive species.

The Conservation District prepared an EIR for the 2008 Land Management Plan and it was certified by the Conservation District's Board on November 12, 2008. A Draft EIS was prepared by BLM for the proposed land exchange between the Conservation District and BLM and a Notice of Availability was posted in the Federal Register on July 24, 2009. However, a final EIS for the proposed land exchange was not completed.

PROJECT SCOPING

The public scoping process was used to actively obtain input from the public and interested Federal, State, Tribal, and local agencies regarding the Proposed Action/Projects. Two public scoping meetings were held to solicit public comment as to the scope of the DEIS/SEIR. The first scoping meeting was held in the Conservation District's office in the City of Redlands on March 18, 2015 at 2:00 PM and the second later that same day at 6:00 PM. Opportunity for public comment (both oral and written) was provided (refer to Section 5.1, *Public Involvement and Scoping*, of this DEIS/SEIR for additional information about the public scoping process and comments).

Information received during scoping assisted BLM, USFWS and the Conservation District in identifying potential environmental issues, impacts, project alternatives, and mitigation measures associated with the Proposed Action. The process provided a mechanism for focusing and clarifying the issues to address in the DEIS/SEIR.

Predominant issue areas identified during public scoping included: threatened, endangered, and other special status species; mineral resources; water resources; recreation; visual resources; cultural resources; land management; and traffic management.

SUMMARY OF IMPACTS

Table ES-1. Summary of Impacts

Environmental Element	Alternative A: No Action	Alternative B: Proposed Action/Projects	Alternative C: 2008 Land Management Plan
Air Quality/ Greenhouse Gas (GHG)	<p>Ongoing operation and maintenance activities carried out in the Plan Area as part of aggregate mining and water conservation would be consistent with local, regional, state and federal air quality plans.</p> <p>No new or increased adverse health risk or greenhouse gas emissions generated by aggregate mining vehicle and equipment exhaust.</p> <p>Existing on-site and off-site emissions from ongoing aggregate mining operations exceed SCAQMD Operations thresholds for NOX, PM10 and PM 2.5 and would continue to violate air quality standards and contribute to an existing air quality violation, a significant and unavoidable impact.</p> <p>Ongoing aggregate mining operations result in concentrations of PM10 above state standards and PM2.5 above state and federal standards at the nearest sensitive receptors, also a significant and unavoidable impact.</p>	<p>Total short-term construction emissions that would result from grading activities and from equipment exhaust for the mining haul road and other proposed small projects do not exceed regional daily SCAQMD thresholds.</p> <p>The emissions of NOX, PM10, and PM2.5 from expanded mining operations are expected to exceed the SCAQMD thresholds and are expected to exceed State AAQS and thus, long-term regional impacts remain significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>Projects that exceed project-specific significance thresholds are considered by SCAQMD to be cumulatively considerable. Therefore, as operational emissions of NOX, PM10, and PM2.5 would exceed the SCAQMD thresholds, even after implementation of mitigation measures, would have a cumulatively considerable net increase in these emissions. Impacts are significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>The Proposed Action/Projects would generate a substantial amount of greenhouse gas emissions annually, that may have a significant impact on the environment. Adverse impacts from the Proposed Action/ Projects related to greenhouse gas emissions are significant and unavoidable. However, the Proposed Action/Projects would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases and potential impacts are less than significant.</p>	<p>Total short-term construction emissions that would result from grading activities and from equipment exhaust for the mining haul road and other proposed small projects do not exceed regional daily SCAQMD thresholds.</p> <p>The emissions of NOX, PM10, and PM2.5 from expanded mining operations are expected to exceed the SCAQMD thresholds and are expected to exceed State AAQS and thus, long-term regional impacts remain significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>Projects that exceed project-specific significance thresholds are considered by SCAQMD to be cumulatively considerable. Therefore, as operational emissions of NOX, PM10, and PM2.5 would exceed the SCAQMD thresholds, even after implementation of mitigation measures, would have a cumulatively considerable net increase in these emissions. Impacts are significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>The Proposed Action/Projects would generate a substantial amount of greenhouse gas emissions annually, that may have a significant impact on the environment. Adverse impacts from the Proposed Action/ Projects related to greenhouse gas emissions are significant and unavoidable. However, the Proposed Action/Projects would not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases and potential impacts are less than significant.</p>
Geology and Mineral Resources	<p>No significant adverse impacts associated with geologic hazards or loss of locally available aggregate resources.</p>	<p>No significant adverse impacts related to geologic hazards including risk of loss, injury or death.</p> <p>No significant adverse impacts related to the loss of locally available aggregate resources.</p>	<p>No significant adverse impacts related to geologic hazards including risk of loss, injury or death.</p> <p>No significant adverse impacts related to the loss of locally available aggregate resources.</p>
Hydrology and Water Quality	<p>Although continued operation and maintenance activities carried out in the Plan Area as a part of aggregate mining and water conservation could result in adverse effects to surface and groundwater quality, implementation of BMPs and compliance with the General Construction Activity and Industrial Stormwater permits significantly reduced that potential. Alternative A is not anticipated to substantially affect hydrology and water quality within the Plan Area or downstream receiving water bodies.</p>	<p>There would be less than significant impacts related to water quality, groundwater supplies, drainage patterns and drainage systems, and flooding and other water related hazards within the Plan Area from the Proposed Action/Projects.</p>	<p>There would be less than significant impacts related to water quality, groundwater supplies, drainage patterns and drainage systems, and flooding and other water related hazards within the Plan Area from the 2008 Land Management Plan.</p>

Environmental Element	Alternative A: No Action	Alternative B: Proposed Action/Projects	Alternative C: 2008 Land Management Plan
Biological Resources	Under this alternative the HCP would not be implemented. There would be no new permanent or temporary significant impacts to Biological Resources, including Covered Species or other special status species.	<p>With implementation of the HCP conservation program, including the conservation and management of 1,529.8 acres of habitat in the Plan Area, impacts to Riversidean Alluvial Fan Sage Scrub (RAFSS) will be reduced to less than significant levels. Additional mitigation is not required.</p> <p>With implementation of the HCP conservation program impacts to slender-horned spineflower, Santa Ana River woolly-star, cactus wren, California gnatcatcher, and San Bernardino kangaroo rat are sufficiently compensated and impacts are reduced to less than significant levels. Additional mitigation is not required.</p> <p>With the implementation of the proposed conservation measures and avoidance and minimization measures impacts to special status plants, reptiles, amphibians, birds, and small mammals, Santa Ana sucker, American badger, and migratory birds would be less than significant. Additional mitigation is not required.</p> <p>Habitat linkages within the Plan Area and between it and other areas would be conserved and the linkage between the Santa Ana River and Plunge Creek would be improved through the construction of a crossing over the recharge basins and the control of non-native plants to enhance the habitat. Based on these conservation measures, impacts to wildlife movement and connectivity would be less than significant. Additional mitigation is not required.</p> <p>Impacts to jurisdictional areas would be less than significant with mitigation. Additional mitigation is not required.</p>	<p>Implementation of the Alternative C would not provide adequate conservation to address impacts to RAFSS from implementation of the plan. Therefore, impacts would be significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>Implementation of Alternative C would not provide adequate conservation to address the impacts to slender-horned spineflower, Santa Ana River woolly-star, cactus wren, California gnatcatcher, and San Bernardino kangaroo rat from implementation of the plan. Therefore, impacts would be significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>Implementation of Alternative C would not provide adequate conservation to address impacts to special status plants, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and small mammal species, American Badger, and migratory birds from implementation of the plan. Therefore, impacts would be significant and unavoidable.</p> <p>Alternative C would largely avoid Santa Ana Sucker critical habitat and substantial areas of upland habitat would be set aside for conservation, providing a source of coarse sediments. Although Alternative C would result in the loss of foraging habitat for the prairie falcon, this loss would be offset by the conservation of 1,347 acres that would provide substantial foraging opportunities. Therefore, with implementation of the proposed conservation measures, impacts to Santa Ana sucker and prairie falcon would be less than significant. Additional mitigation would not be required.</p> <p>Habitat linkages within the Plan Area and between it and other areas would be conserved. Impacts to wildlife movement and connectivity would be less than significant. Additional mitigation is not required.</p> <p>Impacts to jurisdictional areas would be less than significant with mitigation. Additional mitigation is not required.</p>
Land Use	No significant land use impacts.	The Proposed Action is consistent with the applicable land use plans, and it would not result in adverse impacts associated with land use. Rather, the Proposed Action would result in beneficial impacts associated with land use in the Plan Area as compared to the existing condition.	Alternative C is consistent with the applicable land use plans in the area, and they would not result in adverse impacts associated with land use. Rather, Alternative C would result in beneficial impacts associated with land use as compared to the existing condition.
Socioeconomics, Population and Housing, and Environmental Justice	As the aggregate resources are depleted under the current permits and leases, adverse effects from the loss of approximately 175 Robertson’s jobs in the next 1-2 years and 10-12 Cemex jobs in the next 10-15 years would result. However, this loss is not expected to have a significant impact on the local economy, and therefore potential impacts are less than significant. No environmental justice impacts would occur with this alternative.	This alternative would not have an adverse impact, rather it would have a beneficial impact related to socioeconomic conditions in the region and would not result in significant adverse impacts related to environmental justice.	This alternative would not have an adverse impact, rather it would have a beneficial impact related to socioeconomic conditions in the region and would not result in significant adverse impacts related to environmental justice.
Transportation Systems and Traffic	The No Action Alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts associated with transportations systems and traffic.	With implementation of Mitigation Measures MM TRAFFIC-1 through MM TRAFFIC-4 impacts to local City and freeway ramp intersections from expanded aggregate mining operations are reduced to less than significant levels. Impacts to freeway segments, SR-210 (SR-30) northbound and southbound 5 th Street on- and off-ramp influence areas, are significant and unavoidable as no feasible mitigation exists. The Proposed Projects would not conflict with plans, ordinances or policies related to the performance of the circulation system or programs regarding public transit, bicycle or pedestrian facilities. The Proposed Projects would not result in a change in air traffic patterns or safety risks, an increase in hazards, or result in inadequate emergency access. Potential impacts associated with these topics are less than significant.	With implementation of Mitigation Measures MM TRAFFIC-1 through MM TRAFFIC-4 impacts to local City and freeway ramp intersections from expanded aggregate mining operations are reduced to less than significant levels. Impacts to freeway segments, SR-210 (SR-30) northbound and southbound 5 th Street on- and off-ramp influence areas, are significant and unavoidable as no feasible mitigation exists. Potential impacts associated with safety risks, hazards, emergency access, and conflict with plans, policies, or ordinances related to the circulation system are less than significant.

Environmental Element	Alternative A: No Action	Alternative B: Proposed Action/Projects	Alternative C: 2008 Land Management Plan
Visual Resources	There would be no new permanent or temporary impacts to scenic vistas or to the existing visual character within the Wash Plan from the No Action Alternative. There would be no new sources of light or glare generated from the No Action Alternative.	Impacts to visual resources in the Plan Area from the Proposed Action/Projects are less than significant, with the exception of aggregate mining expansion. The creation of the Preserve would protect visual resources in the western portion of the Plan Area by preserving a more cohesive viewshed with intact natural landscape and vegetation. However, during the period between initial disturbances for expanded aggregate mining and when reclamation activities are completed, near views and the visual character and quality of the Plan Area will be substantially and adversely affected, even after implementation of these mitigation measures.	Projects on BLM acquired lands would be moderate and are not anticipated to dominate the landscape. The objective of VRM Class III management to partially retain the existing character of the landscape would be retained on BLM acquired lands. Impacts to visual resources in the Plan Area from 2008 Land Management Plan projects are less than significant, with the exception of aggregate mining expansion. Implementation of the land exchange and the Preserve would result in a positive impact on visual resources in the western portion of the Plan Area by preserving a more cohesive view shed with intact natural landscape and vegetation. However, during the period between initial disturbances for expanded aggregate mining and when reclamation activities are completed, near views and the visual character and quality of the Plan Area will be substantially and adversely affected, even after implementation of these mitigation measures. Adverse effects from mining on visual resources would be significant and unavoidable.
Cultural Resources	The No Action Alternative would not result in significant adverse impacts associated with cultural resources.	The Proposed Action/Projects could result in significant adverse impacts on P-36-5526 , the historic-period orchard complex, that was determined eligible for National Register listing in 1991 and is recommended a “historic property” under Section 106 of the NHPA. The Proposed Action/Projects are anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts on P-36-6062 , a multiple-episode deposit of historic-period debris, that is recommended potentially eligible for National Register listing. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-1 would reduce potential impacts to these cultural resources to less than significant levels.	The 2008 Land Management Plan alternative could result in significant adverse impacts on P-36-5526 , the historic-period orchard complex that was determined eligible for National Register listing in 1991 and is recommended a “historic property” under Section 106 of the NHPA. The 2008 Land Management Alternative is anticipated to result in significant adverse impacts on P-36-6062 , a multiple-episode deposit of historic-period debris that is recommended potentially eligible for National Register listing. Implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-1 would reduce potential impacts to these cultural resources to less than significant levels.
Noise	Under the No Action Alternative, mining operations would still occur, and the noise and vibrations generated from mining activities and traffic would continue. These noise levels currently range from 45.4 dBA to 69.2 dBA and are below established local and regional standards.	<p>The Proposed Action/Projects would not expose people working in the Plan Area to excessive noise levels from a private airstrip or public airport.</p> <p>Construction noise and groundborne vibration from aggregate mining would not exceed standards at nearby sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Water conservation, wells and water infrastructure, transportation, and flood control construction projects are not anticipated to result in substantial increases in ambient noise or significant groundborne vibration and implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would ensure potential impacts from construction on sensitive receptors are less than significant.</p> <p>Aggregate mining operations would not generate noise from mobile or stationary sources that would exceed standards and impacts on sensitive receptors are less than significant.</p> <p>Operation and maintenance of water conservation, water infrastructure, roads, and flood control facilities, and trails, habitat, agriculture would not generate noise from mobile or stationary sources that would exceed standards and potential impacts on sensitive receptors are less than significant.</p>	<p>The 2008 Land Management Plan would not expose people working in the Plan Area to excessive noise levels from a private airstrip or public airport.</p> <p>Construction noise and groundborne vibration from aggregate mining would not exceed standards at nearby sensitive receptors.</p> <p>Water conservation, wells and water infrastructure, transportation, and flood control construction projects and maintenance of these facilities are not anticipated to result in substantial increases in ambient noise or significant groundborne vibration and implementation of Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would ensure potential impacts from construction on sensitive receptors are less than significant.</p> <p>Aggregate mining operations would not generate noise from mobile or stationary sources that would exceed standards and impacts on sensitive receptors are less than significant.</p> <p>Operation and maintenance of water conservation, water infrastructure, roads, and flood control facilities, and trails, habitat, agriculture would not generate noise from mobile or stationary sources that would exceed standards and potential impacts on sensitive receptors are less than significant.</p>
Hazards	There would be no effects related to hazards or use or spill of hazardous materials, as no projects would be implemented.	Construction and maintenance activities for covered activities would involve temporary use of potentially hazardous materials (such as fuel and lubricants used with construction equipment), however, the amount of hazardous materials would be considered relatively small and use in the Plan Area would be temporary. These activities are required to and would follow all applicable Federal, State, and local regulations related to the use and handling of hazardous materials. Construction and maintenance activities are not expected to increase the potential for aviation hazards or wildlife fire hazards. Alternative B would not result in substantial adverse effects associated with hazards.	Construction and maintenance activities for covered activities would involve temporary use of potentially hazardous materials (such as fuel and lubricants used with construction equipment), however, the amount of hazardous materials would be considered relatively small and use in the Plan Area would be temporary. These activities are required to and would follow all applicable Federal, State, and local regulations related to the use and handling of hazardous materials. Construction and maintenance activities are not expected to increase the potential for aviation hazards or wildlife fire hazards. Alternative C would not result in substantial adverse effects associated with hazards.

Environmental Element	Alternative A: No Action	Alternative B: Proposed Action/Projects	Alternative C: 2008 Land Management Plan
Recreation	There would be no new effects from recreational uses because no trails or other recreational facilities would be developed.	Implementation of Alternative B, Proposed Action/Projects would be expected to result in a positive benefit by providing the public with an opportunity to experience the Preserve including visual, wildlife and plant resources. Significant increases in the use of existing parks and other recreational facilities such that physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated will not occur; the expansion of existing facilities will not be required; and physical effects to the environment from the designation and construction of new trails would be minor and the impacts will be mitigated.	Implementation of the 2008 Land Management Plan would result in a positive benefit by providing addition recreational trails open to the public in the Plan Area that also provide the ability to view and enjoy existing natural open space and the sensitive plants and wildlife they support. However, because the SART is excluded from the 2008 Land Management Plan, this Alternative would not provide as much of a benefit to recreation as Alternative B, Proposed Action/Projects. Significant increases in the use of existing parks and other recreational facilities such that physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated will not occur; the expansion of existing facilities will not be required; and physical effects to the environment from the designation and construction of new trails will be minor and the impacts will be mitigated.
Cumulative	<u>Air Quality/ GHG</u> No Action Alternative would continue to result in significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts on air quality.	<u>Air Quality/ GHG</u> The Proposed Action/Projects would result in significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts on air quality and GHG emissions and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required under CEQA.	<u>Air Quality/ GHG</u> Alternative C would result in significant and unavoidable cumulative impacts on air quality and GHG emissions and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required under CEQA.
	<u>Geology and Mineral Resources</u> No cumulative impacts related to geologic hazards. Impacts from the No Action Alternative on the availability of mineral aggregate is not cumulatively considerable.	<u>Geology and Mineral Resources</u> The Proposed Action/Projects would lead to an additional 401.5 acres of aggregate mining activities to occur and an increase in aggregate materials produced from the Plan Area. Therefore, there would be no loss of valuable statewide or regional mineral resources, but an increase in availability. The effects from Alternative B are not expected to result in seismic events, landslides, or other geologic hazards, or loss of availability of valuable mineral resources and therefore, are not cumulatively considerable.	<u>Geology and Mineral Resources</u> The effects from Alternative B are not expected to result in seismic events, landslides, or other geologic hazards, or loss of availability of valuable mineral resources and therefore, are not cumulatively considerable.
	<u>Hydrology and Water Quality</u> There would be no cumulative impacts related to water quality or hydrology.	<u>Hydrology and Water Quality</u> With compliance with state and federal regulations, including the General Construction Activity Permit and Water Quality Management Plans, the Proposed Action's/Project's contribution to cumulative hydrology and water quality impacts are less than significant.	<u>Hydrology and Water Quality</u> As with Alternative B, proposed Projects under Alternative C would also be required to comply with the same state and federal regulations. With compliance with state and federal regulations, including the General Construction Activity Permit and Water Quality Management Plans, the 2008 Land Management Plan's contribution to cumulative hydrology and water quality impacts are less than significant.
	<u>Biological Resources</u> The level of conservation would be reduced under the No Action Alternative as it would not be under one conservation strategy. With Alternative A the HCP would not be permitted and individual projects within the Plan Area would have to be addressed independently as they are proposed and mitigated for direct and indirect impacts on a project-by-project basis. The lack of a comprehensive plan would result in piecemeal approach to both development and conservation, greatly reducing the potential for a coordinated conservation strategy in the Plan Area. This could result in the fragmentation of conserved habitat and inconsistent and inefficient species and habitat management and monitoring. Individual projects would have limited or no ability to mitigate cumulative effects on the resources because the HCP conservation strategy would not be in place to coordinate mitigation and conservation throughout the Plan Area. Accordingly, the cumulative impacts on biological resources would remain significant. The cumulative affects to sensitive species and loss of RAFSS habitat under the No Action Alternative is significant and unavoidable.	<u>Biological Resources</u> Considering the limits on take set by the HCP, the regional scale of the conservation strategy designed to address cumulative impacts on covered species and natural communities, the long term management and monitoring of conservation lands and the HCP conservation strategy's contribution to species recovery, Alternative B would not result in cumulatively considerable contribution to cumulative effects on the affected biological resources. Alternative B provides a robust conservation plan for SBKR which is anticipated to mitigate the direct and indirect effects of Alternative B to less than significant.	<u>Biological Resources</u> Implementation of the Alternative C would not provide adequate conservation to address the cumulative impacts to RAFSS from implementation of the plan. Therefore, implementation of Alternative C would contribute adverse impacts to covered and other special status species and their habitats, including RAFSS, that are cumulatively considerable and significant.

Environmental Element	Alternative A: No Action	Alternative B: Proposed Action/Projects	Alternative C: 2008 Land Management Plan
	<u>Land Use</u> Impacts related to land use from the No Action Alternative are less than significant. There would be no cumulative impacts related to land use.	<u>Land Use</u> The Proposed Action/Projects would not result in adverse impacts associated with land use. Rather, the Proposed Action/Projects would result in beneficial impacts associated with land use in the Plan Area as compared to the existing condition. There would be no cumulative impacts related to land use from Alternative B.	<u>Land Use</u> The 2008 Land Management Plan would not result in adverse impacts associated with land use. Rather, the 2008 Land Management Plan would result in beneficial impacts associated with land use in the Plan Area as compared to the existing condition and there would be no cumulative impacts related to land use from Alternative C.
	<u>Socioeconomics, Population and Housing, and Environmental Justice</u> There are no impacts related to socioeconomics, environmental justice, or population and housing that are cumulatively considerable.	<u>Socioeconomics, Population and Housing, and Environmental Justice</u> As the Proposed Action/Projects would not result in adverse impacts related to socioeconomics, population and housing, or environmental justice it will not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to impacts associated with these topics.	<u>Socioeconomics, Population and Housing, and Environmental Justice</u> As the 2008 Land Management Plan would not result in adverse impacts related to socioeconomics, population and housing, or environmental justice it would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to impacts associated with these topics.
	<u>Transportation Systems and Traffic</u> Under Alternative A, no expanded mining would occur, and no other projects would be implemented. There would be no cumulative impact.	<u>Transportation Systems and Traffic</u> Cumulatively, the aggregate mining activities would contribute to impacts that would require mitigation. As stated earlier in this section, cumulative impacts are evaluated as a part of the Proposed Action/Projects' impacts for traffic. As such any cumulative impacts would require the implementation of the mitigation measures recommended for the Proposed Action/Projects. The significant impacts are forecast to occur with or without implementation of the project and are therefore cumulative in nature. Because several of the improvements to the affected freeway ramp intersections would be included in yet-to-be determined improvement projects sponsored by Caltrans or SANBAG, the Project proponent has no control over the specific timing of when the improvements would be constructed. As a result, these cumulative impacts remain significant and unavoidable until such time as the improvements are constructed.	<u>Transportation Systems and Traffic</u> Although the traffic impacts may be slightly overestimated for Alternative B, they represent anticipated impacts from expanded mining of Alternative C. Therefore, potential cumulative impacts from implementation of Alternative C would be consistent with the analysis and conclusions outlined above for Alternative B.
	<u>Visual Resources</u> Under Alternative A no construction for new Projects would occur, so there would be no cumulative impacts related to visual resources.	<u>Visual Resources</u> Visual impacts from Alternative B range from beneficial to moderate and they are considered significant for mining in terms of the visual and scenic character of portions of the Plan Area; however, they are not anticipated to dominate the landscape. Therefore, the impacts from the Proposed Action/Projects are not considered cumulatively considerable.	<u>Visual Resources</u> Visual impacts from Alternative C range from beneficial to moderate and they are considered significant for mining in terms of the visual and scenic character of portions of the Plan Area; however, they are not anticipated to dominate the landscape. Therefore, the impacts from the Proposed Action/Projects are not considered cumulatively considerable.
	<u>Cultural Resources</u> Under Alternative A no new projects would be constructed. Therefore, there would not be a cumulatively considerable impact to cultural resources.	<u>Cultural Resources</u> With implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-1 potential adverse impacts to resources P-36-5526 and P-36-6062 would be reduced to less than significant levels. Other historic-period resources documented within the APE, including P-36-6068, P-36-6072, P-36-6074, and P-36-6078, are located in areas that would not be impacted by Covered Activities/projects and would be left in place. Therefore, Alternative B would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to cultural resources.	<u>Cultural Resources</u> With implementation of Mitigation Measure CR-1 potential adverse impacts to resources P-36-5526 and P-36-6062 would be reduced to less than significant levels. Other historic-period resources documented within the APE, including P-36-6068, P-36-6072, P-36-6074, and P-36-6078, are located in areas that would not be impacted by Covered Activities/projects and would be left in place. Therefore, Alternative C would not result in cumulatively considerable impacts to cultural resources.
	<u>Noise</u> Under Alternative A, no expanded mining would occur, and no other projects would be implemented. There would be no cumulative noise impact.	<u>Noise</u> The Proposed Action/Projects in conjunction with other projects would not have a cumulative impact on the exposure of people to noise from a private airstrip or public airport, from noise or groundborne vibration on nearby sensitive receptors, or noise from mobile or stationary sources that would be cumulatively considerable.	<u>Noise</u> The 2008 Land Management Plan in conjunction with other projects would not have a cumulative impact on the exposure of people to noise from a private airstrip or public airport, from noise or groundborne vibration on nearby sensitive receptors, or noise from mobile or stationary sources that would be cumulatively considerable.
	<u>Hazards</u> Alternative A would not result in adverse impacts related to hazards they would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution to impacts associated with this topic.	<u>Hazards</u> As the Proposed Action/Projects would not result in adverse impacts related to hazards they would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution of impacts associated with hazards.	<u>Hazards</u> Alternative C would not result in a cumulatively considerable contribution of impacts associated with hazards.
	<u>Recreation</u> Under Alternative A no new trails or other recreational facilities would be developed. There would be no cumulative impacts.	<u>Recreation</u> Implementation of Alternative B would result in a positive benefit to recreation by providing additional recreational trails open to the public and an opportunity to enjoy and appreciate the natural area around them. The anticipated impacts from the trails planned under Alternative B do not constitute and cumulatively considerable incremental contribution to the impact of recreational facilities on the environment. The development of trails within the Plan Area, in conjunction with other projects in the area, are not significant.	<u>Recreation</u> Implementation of Alternative C would result in a positive benefit to recreation by providing additional recreational trails open to the public and an opportunity to enjoy and appreciate the natural area around them.

Environmental Element	Alternative A: No Action	Alternative B: Proposed Action/Projects	Alternative C: 2008 Land Management Plan
Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources (CEQA required analysis and prepared for “proposed projects” under Alternative B only)	<p><u>Air Quality</u> As operational emissions of NOX, PM10, and PM2.5 would exceed the SCAQMD thresholds, even after implementation of mitigation measures, and would have a cumulatively considerable net increase in these emissions and potential for irreversible and/or irretrievable commitments of good air quality.</p> <p><u>Geology and Mineral Resources</u> The expanded mining activities would continue to extract aggregate from the Plan Area. This aggregate is used for construction throughout the region and is not retrievable. Although the natural alluvial processes of the Santa Ana River would result in the transport of aggregate resources from upstream areas into the Plan Area the time it would take to replenish the aggregate being removed is so much greater than the rate of extraction that the expanded mining activities are also considered an irreversible commitment of resources.</p> <p><u>Hydrology and Water Quality</u> Although implementation of the Mining and Reclamation Plans will help restore some of the riverine hydraulic function and values of quarried areas, the mining activities are considered an irreversible commitment of resources as the riverine hydraulic functions and values for habitat are lost for an extremely long period of time. Filling the quarries with aggregate through the natural hydrology of the alluvial process would be required to fully restore the riverine hydraulic functions and values of the quarried areas, which could take hundreds of years. The conversion of areas from natural or disturbed-natural to developed from construction of wells, recharge basins, haul route and roadway expansions) is considered an irretrievable and irreversible commitment of natural hydraulic functions.</p> <p><u>Biological Resources</u> The modification to the Santa Ana River, Plunge Creek and City Creek washes, floodplains and associated habitats from expansion of mining activities are considered an irretrievable commitment of resources as they are lost for a short period of time. The riverine areas in the Plan Area support habitat for federally listed threatened or endangered species. Although implementation of the Mining and Reclamation Plans will help restore some of the riverine function and values of quarried areas, the mining activities are considered an irreversible commitment of resources as the riverine functions and values are lost for an extremely long period of time. Filling the quarries with aggregate through the natural alluvial process would be required to fully restore the riverine functions and values of the quarried areas, which could take hundreds of years.</p> <p>Although the construction activities (wells, new recharge basins, mining haul route, roadway expansions) will not affect large areas they will result in the permanent alteration by removal of any vegetation, compaction of the soils or installation of pavement, concrete and/or rip-rap. The conversion of these areas from natural or disturbed-natural to developed is considered an irretrievable and irreversible commitment of habitat.</p> <p><u>Visual Resources</u> The expansion of mining activities and construction of various projects (wells, new haul road, expanded roadways, recharge basins) in the Plan Area would primarily affect near views, which are considered to be points of view that are observed at close range. Prime views, those that are considered to be scenic views of the mountains, would not be affected by the proposed covered activities. As the covered activities are consistent with the existing uses and facilities located in the Plan Area they would not result in an irreversible or irretrievable commitment of visual resources.</p> <p><u>Cultural Resources</u> Proposed Projects such as aggregate mining, new recharge basins, well and pipeline infrastructure, would include grading or excavation. Thus, the vertical APE includes all subsurface areas where archaeological deposits could be affected. Implemented mitigation measures would greatly reduce the potential for irreversible and/or irretrievable commitments of resources.</p>		

Environmental Element	Alternative A: No Action	Alternative B: Proposed Action/Projects	Alternative C: 2008 Land Management Plan
Short-term Use Versus Long-Term Productivity CEQA required analysis and prepared for “proposed projects” under Alternative B only)	<p><u>Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases</u> The emissions of NOX, PM10, and PM2.5 from expanded mining operations are expected to exceed the SCAQMD thresholds and are expected to exceed State AAQS. While there are control measures regulating emissions of heavy-duty vehicles, there is no way to quantify the reduction of these emissions. Long-term regional impacts remain significant and unavoidable.</p> <p><u>Geology and Mineral Resources</u> The mining activity contributes to the local economy as a source of employment and sales tax. Although the natural alluvial processes of the Santa Ana River would result in the transport of aggregate resources from upstream areas into the Wash Plan Area it would take a very long time, anticipated to be hundreds of years, to replenish the aggregate being removed. Therefore, implementation of the Proposed Action would allow for the short-term extraction of aggregate for use in the region which will reduce the amount of this resource locally available in the long-term.</p> <p><u>Hydrology and Water Quality</u> Construction and grading activities would be short-term and considered less than significant impacts with the required implementation of mitigation measures. Mining operations could have a potential for long-term impacts, but those impacts would be less than significant due to mandated compliance with mining permits and other applicable regulations. As identified in the Cemex and Robertson’s Mining and Reclamation Plans, mining would be restricted to no less than 20 feet above ground water, with no operations allowed in standing groundwater. Existing monitoring wells would be used to monitor ground water levels and to determine the depth to groundwater. Overall, long-term hydrology and water quality would have beneficial productivity of the environment as additional water resources facilities, such as groundwater basins and wells, would be expanded and improved for future and long-term benefits.</p> <p><u>Biological Resources</u> The purpose of the HCP is for conservation of species and habitat in the Plan Area. The HCP will provide the conservation of federally- and state-listed Santa Ana River woolly-star, slender-horned spineflower, and the federally-listed California gnatcatcher and San Bernardino kangaroo rat, as well as the State Species of Special Concern-listed coastal cactus wren. The federally-listed endangered SBKR and California gnatcatcher are known to occur within the Wash Plan Area and the Service has designated portions of the Wash Plan Area as critical habitat for SBKR.</p> <p>Southern California’s biodiversity has diminished as urban growth has caused wildlife habitat to become more fragmented, forming isolated small blocks of land and causing endangered species conflicts. Although the covered activities will result in short-term take of federally- and state-listed plant and wildlife species it will significantly contribute to the long-term productivity of the environment to continue to support these species. Implementation of the Plan helps accomplish the urgent need to preserve remaining biodiversity in Southern California without halting aggregate mining, water conservation and other uses.</p> <p><u>Land Use</u> Land use within the Wash Plan Area combines a diverse arrangement of projects and land uses, of which predominantly involves new development of aggregate mining and new habitat conservation of federally- and state-listed species-related habitats. Thus, long-term productivity of the land uses within the Wash Plan Area is considered a best-case scenario to balance the uses and demands of highly valuable aggregate land, such as habitat conservation, aggregate mining, water conservation, flood control, recreation, transportation and other uses. Long-term productivity of the environment would be deemed most beneficial.</p> <p><u>Socioeconomics, Population and Housing, and Environmental Justice</u> Short-term construction and grading activities could result in employment that would benefit the local labor supply, such as with construction equipment and materials suppliers and service businesses that directly support construction workers. This increase in employment and economic gains, although beneficial, would not be of great enough magnitude to substantially alter existing population patterns, housing demand, or subsequently, socioeconomic conditions within or surrounding the Plan Area. However, long-term productivity of the environment would translate to an overall beneficial socioeconomic impact.</p> <p><u>Transportation Systems and Traffic</u> While not significant, short-term construction and grading activities would result in some increase in traffic that would be temporary in nature. With mitigation measures implemented, the long-term operations and maintenance activities would have a minor benefit for the productivity of the local environment. However, mining and operations would result in potentially significant long-term impacts to freeway segments that traverse the region in year 2030. Because improvements to the freeway segments are under the authority of Caltrans, there is no mechanism for development Project proponents to pay fees or make fair-share contributions toward improving mainline freeway lanes. Long-term productivity related to transportation is minorly beneficial to the local systems, but potentially adverse to freeway segments for the region.</p> <p><u>Visual Resources</u> Short-term construction and grading activities would have temporary disruptions of visual quality within the Wash Plan Area. While not significant, mining activities would have the greatest disruptions and impacts to visual resources. Overall, long-term productivity of visual resources ranges from beneficial to moderate and are considered significant for mining in terms of the visual and scenic character of portions of the Plan Area; however, they are not anticipated to dominate the landscape.</p> <p><u>Cultural Resources</u> Short-term construction and grading activities could have potential adverse or beneficial impacts related to cultural resources as these resources could be uncovered during construction and grading activities. Cultural resources being uncovered during these activities could cause damage to the resource but could also educate people about the cultural resources in the area. Long-term productivity of cultural resources for the area is difficult to estimate. It could be beneficial and/or could be adverse but would not be significantly adverse.</p>		
Growth Inducing Impacts	<p>The No Action Alternative does not include the construction of housing that would directly increase the population in the Plan Area or surrounding areas.</p> <p>The No Action Alternative is not anticipated to foster substantial economic or residential growth in the region; potential impacts from growth inducement are less than significant. No further analysis is included in this DEIS/SEIR.</p>	<p>The Proposed Action/Projects do not include the construction of housing that would directly increase the population in the Plan Area or surrounding areas.</p> <p>The expanded mining is not expected to have a substantial increase in jobs that would foster economic growth and indirectly foster population growth. The Plan Area is located in a region of southern California with a poor jobs-to-housing ratio. Thus, it is anticipated that any new jobs generated by the Proposed Action/ Projects would likely be filled by existing residents in the region.</p> <p>The Proposed Action/Projects are not anticipated to foster substantial economic or residential growth in the region; potential impacts from growth inducement are less than significant. No further analysis is included in this DEIS/SEIR.</p>	<p>The 2008 Land Management Plan alternative does not include the construction of housing that would directly increase the population in the Plan Area or surrounding areas.</p> <p>The 2008 Land Management Plan would have allowed for 32 more acres of new mining as compared to the 2019 HCP. However, consistent with the Proposed Action/Projects, the expanded mining is not expected to have a substantial increase in jobs that would foster economic growth and indirectly foster population growth.</p> <p>The 2008 Land Management Plan alternative is not anticipated to foster substantial economic or residential growth in the region; potential impacts from growth inducement are less than significant. No further analysis is included in this DEIS/SEIR.</p>

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