4. Environmental Analysis

4.1 Introduction

EIR Section 4 describes the potential environmental impacts associated with the Proposed Project, including proposed expansion of excavation within the existing quarry and reclamation. The analysis in EIR Section 4 considers the scoping comments received on the Project's Notice of Preparation (NOP), dated June 20, 2013, as well as scoping comments provided at the Project's Scoping Meeting, which was held on June 27, 2013. Based on the requirements of CEQA and comments received during the EIR's scoping period, EIR Section 4 evaluates the following subjects:

4.2	Aesthetics and Visual Resources	4.9	Hazards and Hazardous Materials
4.3	Agricultural Resources	4.10	Land Use
4.4	Air Quality	4.11	Noise
4.5	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	4.12	Public Services and Utilities
4.6	Biological Resources	4.13	Recreation
4.7	Cultural and Paleontological Resources	4.14	Transportation and Circulation
4.8	Geology, Soils, and Mineral Resources	4.15	Water Quality and Supply

EIR Section 5 (Cumulative Effects) provides the cumulative project scenario and potential impacts that the Proposed Project may incrementally contribute to. EIR Section 6 (Alternatives) provides an evaluation of the alternatives to the Proposed Project that have been considered.

The methodology used to determine potential Project impacts consists of consideration of four key components. Each of these components is summarized below and discussed in each resource and issue area addressed in EIR Sections 4.2 through 4.15.

Existing Conditions. The existing conditions component of each analysis describes the attributes and features of the Project site and its surroundings that may change as a result of implementation of the Proposed Project. Pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15125(a)), existing conditions, otherwise known as "environmental settings," or "baseline" conditions reflect the physical environmental conditions of the Project site and its surroundings at the time that the NOP was released. Each existing conditions assessment includes consideration of the existing quarry's operations and associated entitlements (please refer to EIR Section 2.4, Project History and Description of Existing Entitlements).

San Luis Obispo County Plans and Policies. For each subject addressed, this section identifies applicable plans, policies, goals, standards, ordinances, and guidelines currently adopted by the County for proposed development, including measures designed for environmental protection. The Applicant would be required to comply with applicable County plans, policies, goals, standards, ordinances, and guidelines as part of Project implementation

Regulatory Setting. For each subject analyzed, this section identifies other currently adopted federal, State, and local regulations, programs, and standards that would apply to implementation of the Proposed Project.

Environmental Impact Methodology. This section for each subject analyzed provides the specific impact criteria, impact study area, and impact methodology that are used to evaluate the potential direct and indirect effects associated with implementation of the Proposed Project.

Environmental Impacts and Mitigation. This section for each subject addressed evaluates the potential direct and indirect impacts caused by implementation of the Proposed Project based on the predetermined, specific significance criteria outlined above. In determining the significance of impacts, each assessment considers the ability of existing regulations and other public agency requirements to reduce potential impacts. If an adverse impact is potentially significant despite existing regulations and requirements, mitigation measures have been recommended to reduce or avoid impacts, where feasible. Mitigation measures are only required for potentially significant adverse impacts, as defined below under "Impact Significance Classification Scheme."

Each impact and mitigation measure identified is alphanumerically labeled for consistency. Table 4.4-1 provides the subject-specific prefixes of the impact criteria labeling system that is used in this EIR.

Table 4.4-1. Subject-Specific Prefixes to the Impact Criteria Labeling System

Subject area	Impact Criteria Labeling System
Aesthetics and Visual Resources	AES-
Agricultural Resources	AG-
Air Quality	AQ-
Biological Resources	BIO-
Cultural and Paleontological Resources	CR-
Geology, Soils and Mineral Resources	GEO-
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	GHG-
Hazards and Hazardous Materials	HAZ-
Land Use	LU-
Noise and Vibration	NS-
Public Services	PS-
Recreation	REC-
Transportation and Circulation	TR-
Water Quality and Supply	HYD-

Impact Significance Classification Scheme. While the criteria for determining significant impacts are unique to each environmental resource and issue area, the analysis provided in this EIR applies a uniform classification scheme to the impacts identified according to following definitions:

- ***Class I***: Significant and unavoidable impact; an adverse impact that cannot be mitigated to a level that is less than significant;
- ***Class II***: Significant impact that can be mitigated to a level of less than significant; an adverse impact that can be mitigated to a level that is less than significant through the implementation of recommended mitigation measures;
- ***Class III***: Less than significant impact; an impact that is adverse but less than significant and mitigation is therefore not required;
- ***Class IV***: Beneficial impact; an impact that improves environmental conditions either directly or indirectly and mitigation is therefore not required; and,
- ***No Impact***: Circumstances under which no direct or indirect effect would occur and mitigation is therefore not required.