

CHAPTER 4.0

Environmental Checklist and Discussion

4.1 Aesthetics

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
1. AESTHETICS—Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.1.1 Summary

The MEA found that proposed project construction activities that would occur over an approximate period of 4.5 years would result in a potentially significant impact to the visual character of the site and its surroundings. However, the MEA also found that long-term operation impacts would be less than significant due to the existing commercial and industrial character of the area and because the project would not obstruct or substantially effect prominent visual resources such as the foothills and ridges, significant oak groves, river corridors, lakes and reservoirs, and open space. The MEA found that overall the proposed project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character of the project sites and surroundings because the project structures would be consistent with existing development in the vicinity and because the project sites would be screened with vegetation. The MEA also found that the proposed project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area because exterior lighting would utilize fixtures that would be downcast and shielded where necessary to minimize spill light to off-site locations; surfaces would be treated with non-reflective treatments; and because off-site lighting “spill” would occur in relatively few areas that are densely vegetated and would not impact any adjacent urbanized land uses, such as residences or businesses. Finally, the MEA concluded that the proposed project would have a less than significant impact with regard to the substantial damaging of scenic

resources within a state scenic highway. The MEA reached this conclusion because it found that there were no scenic resources located on the project sites.

4.1.1 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the project applicant has revised its site plan for the Idaho Maryland site to include various additional structures onsite. As part of the EIR analysis, new visual simulations of the project sites will be provided to reflect the most recent proposed project. Additionally, since the MEA analysis, the project applicant has revised its plans to include approximately 239,000 square feet of landscaped area at the Idaho Maryland site; this is an increase of approximately 224,000 square feet from the project analyzed by the MEA. Therefore, the proposed increased landscaped area could further reduce impacts to visual quality of the project site. However, the additional on-site structures proposed could result in increased impacts associated with new sources of light and glare. These visual quality impacts will be addressed further in the EIR.

4.2 Agriculture Resources

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
2. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES				
Would the project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland of Statewide Importance, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4.2.1 Summary

The MEA analysis shows that the project sites are designated by the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of California Department of Conservation as *Urban and Built-Up Land* and *Other Land* and thus, that proposed project activities would not result in conversion of land designated as *Prime Farmland*, *Farmland of Statewide Importance*, or *Unique Farmland*. None of the project sites, or immediately surrounding sites, is zoned for agricultural uses and, while Nevada County does have a Williamson Act Contract program, the project sites are not located within a Williamson Act Contract. Therefore, the MEA concluded that the proposed project would not result in any impacts to agriculture resources.

4.2.1 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to agriculture impacts. Therefore, because the proposed project would not result in any impacts to agriculture resources, impacts related to agriculture resources will not be addressed further in the EIR.

4.3 Air Quality

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
3. AIR QUALITY				
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.3.1 Summary

Project Construction

The MEA found that project construction emissions would result in intermittent, temporary increases in air pollution emissions that would therefore result in a potentially significant impact. Specifically, the MEA found that construction activities could result in significant quantities of dust, and as a result, local visibility and PM10 concentrations may be adversely affected on a temporary and intermittent basis during the construction period. Fugitive dust would include not only PM10, but also larger particles which could result in nuisance-type impacts. An incremental increase to regional ozone concentrations would also result from heavy equipment and construction worker commute trips. The MEA found that construction activities that include the use of solvents in adhesives, non-waterbased paints, thinners, some insulating materials, and caulking materials would be a source of reactive organic gas emissions but that these types of sources are small and intermittent and thus would not significantly affect air quality.

The MEA found that the primary effect of construction activities would be increased dust and a locally elevated level of particulate matter. The MEA listed dust control measures that would be included as part of the proposed project and also recommended a list of mitigation measures that should also be implemented as part of project construction activities. The MEA concluded that air emissions from construction activities will need to be estimated based on CARB URBEMIS emissions model or other appropriate tools along with the use of project specific construction data

such as the type of construction activities, type of equipment, and the number of construction workers and truck trips.

Project Operations

The MEA found that proposed project operations would generate emissions of criteria pollutants, including PM₁₀, NO_x, CO, SO₂, and ROG, at the project sites and along project haul routes; these emissions could be above applicable significance thresholds and would thus result in a potentially significant impact. The MEA found that air quality impacts would be associated with all phases of mining operations but would be most prevalent during the processing and transportation operations prior to establishing the a permanent underground crusher. Potential air pollution impacts would include dust and combustion emissions from the following activities: underground operations (drilling, blasting, mucking, screening, and crushing); ore transport and storage (hauling, conveying, stockpiling), ore processing (screening, crushing, grinding, and classification), ceramic feed preparation and heating, glaze preparation and applicable, and vehicle traffic (worker, haul, and equipment). The MEA concluded that air emissions of criteria air pollutants will need to be determined based on available information regarding the processing operations and haul truck data using methodology found in EPA's AP-42, manufacturer's data, permit documents, CARB's EMFAC2002, or other appropriate references.

The MEA found that emissions of NO_x may be significant as a result of the burning of natural gas as part of the ceramics plant and the mobile equipment. Emissions of PM₁₀ may be significant due to fugitive dust from mining operations and emissions of ROG may be significant due to glaze operations, the ceramic plant, and onsite mobile equipment and haul trucks. The blasting activities and potential impacts of asbestos to the ambient air via vent shafts may also be of concern.

The MEA also found that the proposed project would generate DPM emissions from onsite mobile sources and toxic air contaminants (TACs) emissions from processing operations, which could increase exposure to project TAC emissions at nearby receptors thereby resulting in a potentially significant impact. The MEA concluded that DPM emissions will need to be calculated for the onsite diesel equipment and for onsite haul trucks as well as the carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic health risks from the proposed project. It was also concluded that TAC emissions would also be released by the ceramic and glaze operations and that TAC emissions will be calculated as well as the carcinogenic and non-carcinogenic health risks.

Additionally, the MEA found that the proposed project traffic would generate localized CO emissions at intersections in the project vicinity which would result in a potentially significant impact and that vehicular emissions will need to be computed using CARB's emission factor model, EMFAC2002. As with DPM, CALINE4 will need to be used to determine CO concentrations along the roadways utilized by worker traffic and project-generated trucks.

The MEA also found that project operations could lead to an increase in odorous emissions associated with the ceramic and gold processing and the water treatment plant thereby resulting in

a potentially significant impact. Thus, the MEA concluded that project emissions will need to be evaluated for the odorous nature and potential frequency of impacts at sensitive receptors.

Finally, the MEA concluded that the proposed project could result in a cumulative contribution to regional criteria pollutants which would be a potentially significant impact. Project emissions calculations will need to be compared to significance thresholds and the local General Plan, and their consistency with the regional air quality plan needs to be determined.

4.3.1 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the project applicant has revised its estimate of construction worker trips and has also reduced its anticipated ceramics production. However, the MEA did not use any of these numbers to calculate projected emissions; emissions will be calculated for the EIR analysis. Because all of the impacts described above, and in more detail in the MEA, would be potentially significant, they will be addressed in the EIR. As part of the EIR analysis, emissions will be calculated using existing information as well as additional information provided by the project applicant to the City and its consultants. Additionally, the EIR will address potential project impacts associated with greenhouse gas emissions and identify mitigation measures, as appropriate.

4.4 Biological Resources

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
4. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES— Would the project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4.4.1 Summary

The MEA found that the proposed project could have a potentially significant impact on species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species. Although habitat evaluations and protocol level surveys have not been performed for special-status species within the study area, the MEA found that the study area supports several vegetation communities that could provide habitat for special-status species and that due to the presence of serpentine and gabbro soils on the Idaho-Maryland site, there is a high probability that rare plants may occur, particularly within the mixed chaparral community. It also found that the CNDDDB has a documented occurrence of Pine Hill flannelbrush at the Idaho-Maryland site.

The MEA also found that the project sites contain several sensitive communities including montane riparian, serpentine chaparral, and montane freshwater marsh, all of which are

considered to be sensitive natural communities by the California Department of Fish and Game, and thus, the proposed project would result in a potentially significant impact to riparian habitat and sensitive natural communities.

Additionally, the MEA found that the proposed project would have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands. Based on a wetland delineation (that has not yet been submitted to the Corps for verification), approximately 0.02 acres of potentially jurisdictional wetlands were identified on the Round Hole site, and approximately 180 linear feet of potentially jurisdictional “waters of the U.S.” were identified on the New Brunswick site; however, the MEA found that the project as proposed is unlikely to impact either of these features. The MEA also found that the Idaho-Maryland site exhibited wetland characteristics such as wetland hydrology and a predominance of hydrophytic vegetation, and therefore may be considered jurisdictional by the Corps.

The MEA also found that the proposed project could alter the movement patterns of wildlife species traveling between the surrounding habitats and the project sites but that there are no known terrestrial migration corridors through or in the vicinity of the project sites and the wildlife that could use the sites are highly mobile and could adjust their movement to open lands adjacent to the projects sites. The MEA stated that while the project could result in the removal of woodland habitat that wintering mule deer may use for food and shelter, most of the habitat proposed for removal occurs in islands of woodland habitat and would not result in the fragmentation of woodland habitat. However, the project could impact aquatic (fisheries) nursery sites to riparian habitats and streams through changes to water quality, velocity, or riparian vegetation. Because aquatic habitats have not been characterized in sufficient detail, the MEA concluded that potential impacts to aquatic habitats within the project sites would be a potentially significant impact on fisheries nursery sites.

The MEA also found that the proposed project could result in potentially significant impacts related to the removal of a total of 1,029 trees, most of which would be ponderosa pine and cottonwood trees. Other tree species to be removed would include grey pine, madrone, incense cedar, black oak, black locust, big leaf maple, and live oak. Woodlands such as those found on the project sites, as well as the individual trees within those woodlands, are protected by a variety of State and local ordinances, including the City of Grass Valley Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance, and the Nevada County Tree Preservation and Protection Ordinance.

Finally, the MEA found that there are no adopted habitat conservation or natural community conservation plans in the project area and therefore, there would be no impact to any such plans.

4.4.2 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the project applicant has revised its proposed project description to include additional onsite facilities as well as significantly more landscaped area at the Idaho-Maryland site. The project applicant has also revised its estimate of trees that would be removed. Rather than 1,029 trees, the project would result in the removal of approximately 1,180

trees on the Idaho-Maryland site; the project applicant proposes to plant 335 new trees to replace the 1,180 trees that would be removed. Because impacts related to candidate, sensitive, or special-status species, sensitive communities, federally protected wetlands, aquatic habitats, and tree removal would be potentially significant, they will be addressed in the EIR. Impacts to Wolf Cree and the South Fork of Wolf Creek will also be addressed in the EIR. Because there are no adopted habitat conservation or natural community conservation plans in the project area, and therefore, no impacts to any such plans would result from the proposed project, such impacts will not be addressed further in the EIR.

4.5 Cultural Resources

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
5. CULTURAL RESOURCES— Would the project:				
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ¹	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a unique archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.5.1 Summary

The MEA found that the proposed project could have the potential to impact historical resources at the project sites. First, the MEA found that the mine shaft opening at the Idaho Maryland site may have importance in terms of the overall mining landscape and may yield information related to the distribution of mining in the Grass Valley area. Second, the MEA found that the Nevada County Narrow Gauge Railroad may be located within a “few feet” of the New Brunswick site and that any intact portion of the Railroad may qualify as an historical resource as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.6(a) and may qualify for the National Register as an historic site of local and regional significance because of its association with events important to California history. The proposed pipeline south of the New Brunswick site to the South Fork of Wolf Creek may traverse the Railroad corridor. Finally, the MEA found that the proposed project could adversely impact an historic canal (D-S Canal) that passes along Idaho Maryland Road in front of the entrance to the Round Hole site. The MEA erroneously identified these impacts as less than significant with mitigation; however, these impacts would actually be potentially significant and will therefore be discussed in the EIR.

In addition, the MEA found that while the potential existence of prehistoric archaeological resources, paleontological resources, and human remains interred outside formal cemeteries on the project sites is moderately low, accidental discovery of such resources during construction could damage or destroy them, which would result in a significant impact to these resources. The MEA then identified standard mitigation measures to avoid or reduce such impacts to a less than significant level.

¹ The MEA erroneously marked this impact as less than significant with mitigation; it should have been— and now in this Initial Study is — marked as potentially significant.

4.5.1 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to cultural resources. The EIR will address potentially significant impacts related to historic resources. In addition, while the MEA found that impacts related to the unexpected encounter of prehistoric archaeological, paleontological resources, and human remains could be mitigated to less than significant levels, these impacts will nevertheless be addressed in the EIR.

4.6 Geology, Soils, Seismicity, and Mineral Resources

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
6. GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND SEISMICITY— Would the project:				
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of wastewater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) 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?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4.6.1 Summary

The MEA found that impacts related to ground shaking in the event of an earthquake on one of the active fault zones in the region would be less than significant because strong ground motion is not expected and because use of modern seismic design criteria and construction techniques would reduce injury and damage to buildings and mine workings. Impacts related to potential ground failure due to liquefaction and landslides were also found to be less than significant because while such failures could cause localized damage to structures and engineered fills, they are not likely to cause injury; the threat of damage to future improvements on the Idaho Maryland site would be minimal because subsurface materials beneath the property are mostly lacking in

the combination of soil types and groundwater conditions needed for this type of failure. The MEA also found impacts related to erosion during construction activities to be less than significant because the project would implement recommended Best Management Practices including seeding graded portions of the site following grading, hydroseeding slopes, using netting and binding agents to keep seeds and straw intact, installing drainage ditches, and properly conveying overland flow. Geological impacts related to the earthen berm separating the Milco property and Idaho-Maryland site were also found to be less than significant since the proposed project does not include use of this berm to support structural improvements or roadways and because any slope failures, subsidence, or settlement that does occur is unlikely to cause serious damage or injury. The MEA also found that impacts related to the existence of expansive soils on the project site to be less than significant because standard engineering practices would be implemented.

Impacts found by the MEA to be potentially significant included impacts related to subsidence hazards associated with existing subsurface mine works which could present a hazard to people, mine workers, and property and impacts related to fill material that is unable to support structural improvements. First, the MEA found that the Old Brunswick shaft of the Idaho-Maryland mine collapsed during a storm in 1998 causing a sink hole that engulfed property and undercut the foundation of a private home. Collapse and surface subsidence could potentially be triggered by project activities such as mine dewatering, re-establishment and reconditioning of mine workings, blasting, or surface construction and uncontrollable natural occurrences (i.e., earthquake-related rock falls, storm runoff, or cave-in) can lead to tunnel collapse and subsidence. Second, the MEA found the presence of fill in portions of the previously graded areas of the Idaho-Maryland site and New Brunswick site. Much of the fill encountered during a previous subsurface investigation at the Idaho-Maryland site reportedly contained organic material that would not be suitable to support structural improvements.

Finally, the MEA found that the proposed project would not result in impacts related to fault rupture hazards, inadequate soils for wastewater disposal, and loss of availability of a known mineral resource or of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site.

4.6.2 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to geology, soils, and seismicity. The EIR will include a discussion of the potentially significant impacts identified above. Additionally, the EIR will address impacts identified as less than significant for informational purposes. Because there would be no impacts related to fault rupture hazards, inadequate soils for wastewater disposal, and loss of availability of a known mineral resource or of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site, these impacts will not be addressed further in the EIR.

4.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
7. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS				
Would the project:				
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.7.1 Summary

The MEA found that the proposed project could result in potentially significant impacts to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials associated with ore processing as well as the use and storage of explosives, fuels, lubricants, and cleaning solvents. While all material safety data sheets would be maintained onsite and all chemical handling proposed by the applicant would be performed in accordance with a site Emergency Response Plan/Health and Safety Plan (ERP/HSP), the MEA found that the impact could be potentially significant because a site-specific Emergency Action Plan has not yet been prepared.

The MEA also found that the proposed project could result in the accidental release of hazardous materials into the environment due to the existence of potential unknown contamination at the project site, therefore resulting in a potentially significant impact. Additionally, the MEA found that the proposed project could result in a potentially significant hazard to the public or the environment because the Idaho-Maryland site is listed as a hazardous material site (it is listed in the LUST and Cortese databases as a location of a leaking underground storage tank).

The MEA also found that the proposed project would not be located within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school site. It found that the proposed project would not result in a hazard associated with its proximity to the nearby Nevada County Airstrip located approximately 1.5 miles from the project area because the airport is a relatively small airport with infrequent general aviation activity; no impacts would result from proximity to an airstrip because there are no private airstrips in the vicinity. Finally, the MEA found that the project would not interfere with implementation of an existing emergency response or evacuation plan because of its relatively remote location.

The MEA did not include a discussion of the project's potential to expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires; however, these potential impacts will be addressed in the EIR.

4.7.2 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to hazards and hazardous materials. The EIR will include a discussion of the potentially significant impacts identified above and will address information that would be contained in the project applicant's Emergency Response Plan and information obtained from additional due diligence site investigations and from soil and groundwater analyses. The EIR will also address potential hazardous materials impacts that could result from installation of the NID trunk line extension. Additionally, the EIR will address impacts related to wildland fires.

Because there would be no impacts related to the project's proximity to a school, an airport, or a private airstrip, these impacts will not be addressed further in the EIR.

4.8 Hydrology and Water Quality

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
8. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY— Would the project:				
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other authoritative flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4.8.1 Summary

The MEA found that the proposed project could result in potentially significant impacts related to potential depletion of groundwater well supplies as a result of mine dewatering, potential downstream flooding and increased bank erosion as a result of discharge of mine water into Wolf Creek, and potential flooding at the Idaho-Maryland site as a result of potential rupture of the berm that separates it from the Milco property. Regarding the potential depletion of groundwater

wells, the MEA analyzed the results of a 1995 EIR conducted for the Idaho-Maryland site, which identified potential impacts of mine dewatering at 64 local domestic wells; the MEA concluded that impacts to these wells would be a potentially significant impact. The MEA determined that an updated assessment would be needed to determine the presence and location of domestic water wells and evaluate the potential risk of dewatering those wells as a result of mine dewatering activities. Regarding potentially significant downstream flooding and bank erosion impacts, the MEA found that discharge at the New Brunswick site would not be controlled through detention (as it would be at the Idaho-Maryland site) and may result in measurable effects downstream, especially in reaches of Wolf Creek closer to the City of Grass Valley. While a 1995 EIR suggested that the flat cobble channel and cohesive soil conditions in the South Fork of Wolf Creek reduce its potential to erode and that high winter flows would cause erosion in the channel with or without added flows from the project's dewatering discharge, there still remains some uncertainty as to the effect on the Wolf Creek/South Fork of Wolf Creek system from the project's proposed discharge of mine water and thus, the MEA concluded that without acceptable data, this uncertainty cannot be resolved and suggested a supplemental surface water study. And finally, with regard to potential rupture of the berm resulting in flooding at the Idaho-Maryland site, the MEA found that rupture of the berm would likely be gradual thus allowing the drainage system time to accommodate the sudden increase in flow but concluded that operations at the ceramic facility and elsewhere on the Idaho-Maryland site could be temporarily interrupted.

The MEA also found that the proposed project would result in less than significant impacts related to degradation of the water quality within Wolf Creek and South Fork Wolf Creek and alteration of the topography of the Idaho-Maryland site. Regarding the degradation of water quality within Wolf Creek and South Fork Wolf Creek, the MEA found that water quality that could be affected by project construction and operation but that impacts would be reduced to less than significance levels by complying with existing regulatory requirements. In addition, it found that existing water quality (samples were collected from the New Brunswick mine shaft) is relatively free of heavy metals, volatile organic compounds, and pesticides and that the project would treat the water prior to discharge to the creeks under an NPDES permit. Regarding alteration of site topography, the MEA found that site improvements would actually improve drainage and reduce future erosion, sedimentation, and localized flooding, and therefore, found these impacts to be less than significant.

Finally, the MEA found that the proposed project would not result in impacts related to placement of housing or structures within a 100-year flood hazard area and exposure of people to hazards associated with inundation by seiches, tsunamis, or mudflows.

4.8.1 Project Descriptions Changes

The EIR will include an analysis of the potentially significant impacts related to the mine dewatering discussed above. Additionally, the EIR will address the impacts identified as less than significant related to degradation of water quality within Wolf Creek and South Fork Wolf Creek and alteration of the topography of the Idaho-Maryland site.

Because the MEA found that the proposed project would not result in impacts related to placement of housing or structures within a 100-year flood hazard area and exposure of people to hazards associated with inundation by seiches, tsunamis, or mudflows, these issues will not be addressed further in the EIR.

4.9 Land Use and Planning

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
9. LAND USE AND PLANNING— Would the project:				
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4.9.1 Summary

The MEA found that the main mining operations would occur on contiguous parcels and that the proposed project would not construct roadways or buildings that would result in the physical division of an established community. In addition, the MEA found that there are no adopted habitat conservation or natural community conservation plans that are applicable to the project site.

As part of the MEA analysis, a land use plan consistency analysis was prepared. The MEA analyzed project consistency with the Nevada County General Plan, the Nevada County Zoning Map and Ordinance, the Grass Valley Annexation Plan and City of Grass Valley Annexation Resolution, the City of Grass Valley General Plan, the City of Grass Valley Zoning Map and Ordinance, the Whispering Pines Corporate Community Specific Plan, and the City of Grass Valley Parks and Recreation Master Plan. The results of this consistency analysis are summarized below.

Nevada County General Plan

The MEA found that the proposed mine ventilation, internal mine hoisting, emergency underground access, and portal for dewatering of the mine at the New Brunswick site would be consistent with the site's *Industrial* land use designation because these uses are classified as supporting business and service uses of producing goods (gold). The MEA also found that because the Idaho Maryland site would be annexed into the City of Grass Valley under the proposed project, no County land use designations would be applicable to the proposed project at the Idaho Maryland site.

Nevada County Zoning Map and Ordinance

The MEA found that the proposed project would result in a potential conflict with the Nevada County Zoning Map and Ordinance. However, while this conclusion remains unchanged, the MEA contained an error in reaching that conclusion. The MEA should have stated that the proposed use of the New Brunswick site for mine ventilation, internal mine hoisting, emergency underground access, and a portal for dewatering of the mine would generally be consistent with the *Light Industrial – Site Performing Combining District* (M1-SP), which provides for “the production, repairing, distribution and warehousing of goods and equipment, along with supporting businesses and services.” And then the MEA should have stated that the Zoning Ordinance also states that “[u]ses should provide for buffering from adjacent land uses to minimize incompatibility and should have convenient, controlled access to arterial or major collector roads without passing through residential areas.” While the New Brunswick site would have convenient direct access to E. Bennett Road, and while access for subsurface mining is allowed with a use permit within this zoning designation, the construction and operation of a 3,000 square-foot hoist house on the New Brunswick site would not be buffered from adjacent residential land uses. Thus, the proposed project would result in a potential conflict with the Nevada County Zoning Map and Ordinance.

In addition, the MEA also found that because the Idaho Maryland site would be annexed into the City of Grass Valley under the proposed project, no County zoning designations would be applicable to the proposed project at the Idaho Maryland site.

Grass Valley Annexation Plan and City of Grass Valley Annexation Resolution

The MEA found that the proposed annexation of the Idaho Maryland site would be consistent with Nevada County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) policies and the City of Grass Valley Annexation Plan because the Plan forecasts the Idaho Maryland site to be annexed in 2000-2005 and the New Brunswick site to be annexed in 2015-2020 and because the proposed annexation would not result in the creation of unincorporated islands of land. In addition, the MEA found that as part of the proposed project, the project applicant will be required to submit written compliance demonstrating adherence to the City of Grass Valley Resolution No. 03-39.

City of Grass Valley General Plan

Idaho Maryland Site

The MEA found that the City of Grass Valley General Plan currently designates the Idaho Maryland site for *Business Park* and *Urban Medium Density* (UMD) residential uses but that the project applicant has submitted an application for a General Plan Amendment, which would change the City land use designations of the site to *Manufacturing Industrial*. The MEA also found that as shown in the General Plan Mineral Management Element, the Idaho Maryland site is within a designated Mineral Management Area and that the northern half of the Idaho Maryland site is further identified as a “Targeted for Possible Mining Conservation” area. In

addition, all areas within Grass Valley and the Planning Area are classified by the State Division of Mines and Geology as MRZ-2, or areas where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present or where it is judged that there is a high likelihood for their presence. Therefore, the MEA concluded that a General Plan Amendment that would change the land use designation for the Idaho Maryland site to *Manufacturing Industrial* would be consistent with the site's importance as a mineral resource area. However, while the General Plan Amendment would allow a site that is currently vacant/industrial to be used for mineral resource extraction, consistent with the City's Mineral Management Element, this change would also result in the loss of land within the City designated for residential uses (*Urban Medium Density Residential*), which could conflict with adopted local plans and policies.

The MEA also concluded that the proposed project could conflict with the City of Grass Valley Capital Improvements Program, which has been adopted by the General Plan. The Capital Improvements Program provides for a proposed southerly extension of Centennial Drive to supply a north-south arterial link between Idaho Maryland Road and E. Bennett Road. The MEA concluded that the proposed project could conflict with this Program because the City plans for the road extension to be completed by 2015 but the project applicant does not propose to complete the road extension until the completion of its proposed mining operation (approximately 20 years into the future).

New Brunswick Site

While the New Brunswick site is currently within the jurisdiction of Nevada County and would continue to remain under Nevada County jurisdiction under the proposed project, it is nevertheless located within the City of Grass Valley's sphere of influence. The MEA concluded that the proposed use of the site for mine ventilation, internal mine hoisting, emergency underground access, and a portal for mine dewatering would be consistent with the City's *Manufacturing Industrial* designation which includes light manufacturing, automotive services, warehousing/distribution, and wholesale-retail outlets land uses.

Round Hole Site

The Round Hole site is currently and would continue to be located within the jurisdiction of the City of Grass Valley. The MEA concluded that the proposed mine ventilation, emergency access, and parking at the Round Hole site would be consistent with its *Business Park* land use designation, the purpose of which is to accommodate "a variety of employment gathering land uses...[including] a full range of industrial and commercial land uses."

City of Grass Valley Zoning Map and Ordinance

Idaho Maryland Site

Because it is not currently within the City of Grass Valley, the City of Grass Valley Zoning Map does not currently identify zoning designations for the Idaho Maryland site. However, under the proposed project, the Idaho Maryland site would be annexed into the City and the project

applicant proposes that the City prezone the Idaho Maryland site to *General Industrial – Mineral Resource* (M-2/MR). The MEA concluded that the M-2 zoning designation would be a compatible zoning designation with the proposed General Plan land use designation of *Manufacturing Industrial*. The MEA also concluded that the proposed Mineral Resource Combining District zoning designation would be consistent with the site's designated importance as a mineral resource area.

New Brunswick Site

The MEA found that the City's existing Zoning Map does not currently identify zoning designations for the New Brunswick site since it is not within the City's jurisdiction and that under the proposed project, zoning regulations would continue to be controlled by the Nevada County Zoning Map and Ordinance.

Round Hole Site

The MEA found that consistent with the General Plan Land Use designations, the Round Hole site is currently zoned Specific Plan (SP1-A) in the City's Whispering Pines Specific Plan. See below for a summary of the project's consistency with the Whispering Pines Corporate Community Specific Plan.

Whispering Pines Corporate Community Specific Plan

The MEA found that a critical component of the Whispering Pines Specific Plan is preservation and furtherance of the existence of the Ponderosa Pines that are currently located in the Specific Plan Area. The MEA then concluded that potential conflicts with the Specific Plan could result from impacts to the 70 Ponderosa Pine trees located on the Round Hole site and that removal of any Ponderosa Pines from the Round Hole site would be a potentially significant conflict with the Specific Plan.

City of Grass Valley Park and Recreation Master Plan

The MEA found that the City of Grass Valley Park and Recreation Master Plan identifies a planned Neighborhood/Pocket Park on the Idaho Maryland site and concluded that because the proposed project does not include development of a neighborhood or pocket park, the project would result in a potentially significant conflict with the Park and Recreation Master Plan.

4.9.2 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to the physical division of an established community or potential conflicts with an adopted habitat or natural community conservation plan. Therefore, these topics will not be addressed further in the EIR.

In addition, since the MEA analysis, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect the conclusion that the proposed project could potentially conflict with adopted plans and policies. However, the project description has changed such that it would affect the MEA land use consistency analysis as discussed below.

Nevada County General Plan

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency with the Nevada County General Plan. While the project would be consistent with the Nevada County General Plan, the EIR will include a discussion of this consistency for informational purposes.

Nevada County Zoning Map and Ordinance

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency with the Nevada County Zoning Map and Ordinance. While the MEA was erroneous in its consistency analysis, the conclusion that the proposed project could conflict with the Nevada County Zoning Ordinance remains unchanged because the construction and operation of a 3,000 square-foot hoist house and 1,400 square-foot water treatment system on the New Brunswick site would not be buffered from adjacent residential uses. Therefore, consistency with the Nevada County Zoning Map and Ordinance will be discussed in the EIR.

Grass Valley Annexation Plan and City of Grass Valley Annexation Resolution

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency with the City of Grass Valley Annexation Plan and City of Grass Valley Annexation Resolution. While the project would be consistent with the Annexation Plan and Annexation Resolution, the EIR will include a discussion of this consistency for informational purposes.

City of Grass Valley General Plan

Idaho Maryland Site

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency at the Idaho Maryland site with the City of Grass Valley General Plan. While the proposed General Plan Amendment for the Idaho Maryland site would be consistent with City's Land Use and Mineral Management Elements, the EIR will include a discussion of this consistency for informational purposes. In addition, the EIR will also address potential conflicts associated with the conversion of land designated for residential uses to an industrial use.

In addition, since the MEA analysis, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency at the Idaho Maryland site with the City of Grass Valley Capital Improvements Program. While a right-of-way for the Centennial Road extension would be set aside, which would allow the City to build the extension at a future date, IMMC does not plan to allow public access on this right-of-way during the life of the project. Therefore, potential conflicts with the City of Grass Valley Capital Improvements Program will be discussed in the EIR.

New Brunswick Site

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency at the New Brunswick site with the City of Grass Valley General Plan. While the proposed uses at the New Brunswick site would be consistent with Grass Valley General Plan, the EIR will include a discussion of this consistency for informational purposes.

Round Hole Site

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency at the Round Hole site with the City of Grass Valley General Plan. While the proposed uses at the Round Hole site would be consistent with Grass Valley General Plan, the EIR will include a discussion of this consistency for informational purposes.

City of Grass Valley Zoning Map and Ordinance

Idaho Maryland Site

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency at the Idaho Maryland site with the City of Grass Valley Zoning Ordinance. While the proposed zoning change and uses at the Idaho Maryland site would be consistent with Grass Valley Zoning Ordinance, the EIR will include a discussion of this consistency, and will address project consistency with building height standards set forth in the City of Grass Valley 2007 Development Code. In addition, since the MEA analysis was conducted, the project applicant has submitted a Planned Development (PD) Permit Application for the Idaho-Maryland site to the City of Grass Valley. The project applicant's stated purpose in applying for a PD designation is to allow for flexibility in Development Code standards to address site features and the unique buildings and facilities required for the proposed mining and ceramics manufacturing development. This proposed PD designation and its potential land use consistency impacts will also be addressed in the EIR.

New Brunswick Site

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency at the New Brunswick site

with the City of Grass Valley Zoning Ordinance. Because the Grass Valley Zoning Ordinance would not be applicable to the New Brunswick site, this consistency will not be addressed further.

Round Hole Site

Since the MEA analysis, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency at the Round Hole site with the City of Grass Valley Zoning Ordinance. Because the site is zoned Specific Plan in the City's Whispering Pines Specific Plan, project consistency at the Round Hole site with the Grass Valley Zoning Ordinance will be addressed in the EIR in the consistency analysis with the Whispering Pines Corporate Community Specific Plan.

Whispering Pines Corporate Community Specific Plan

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to project consistency with the Whispering Pines Corporate Community Specific Plan. Therefore, potential conflicts with the Whispering Pines Specific Plan related to removal of Ponderosa Pine trees will be discussed in the EIR.

City of Grass Valley Park and Recreation Master Plan

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, IMMC has revised its plans; instead of a 5,200 square-foot visitor's center, IMMC now proposes to construct and operate a 5,200 square-foot education center and a 114,700 square-foot outdoor historical display/park on the Idaho Maryland site. Hours of operation and entry/admission fees have not yet been determined for these facilities. The education center would house offices, washrooms, and storage rooms, and an exhibit area that would contain interpretive displays and descriptions of historical and current site activities. The proposed outdoor historical display/park would consist of an outdoor exhibit of historical mining artifacts. Upon reclamation, the Education Center would be made available to the City or the California Department of Parks and Recreation for operation. The EIR will address the issue of whether the proposed education center and outdoor historical display would be consistent with the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

4.10 Noise

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
10. NOISE—Would the project:				
a) Result in exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan area, or, where such a plan has not been adopted, in an area within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project located in the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4.10.1 Summary

The MEA found that proposed project construction activities could result in temporary and intermittent increases in noise levels and ground-borne vibration at nearby sensitive receptor locations. Specifically, construction noise impacts could result from use of construction equipment and blasting at locations near the decline tunnel, as well as construction-related haul trips along haul routes. The MEA also found increases to the ambient noise levels at nearby residences associated with operational activities to be potentially significant. Operational noise sources would include transportation and non-transportation noise sources (aboveground stationary and off-road mobile equipment), aboveground processing at the Idaho-Maryland site, production blasting, the ventilation fan at the Round Hole site, and pumps for dewatering at the New Brunswick site.

The MEA found that impacts associated with project proximity to a public or public use airport to be less than significant because the 65 dB CNEL contour for the nearby airport does not extend to any portion of the project sites, and therefore, the project would not expose people at the project sites to excessive noise levels from an airport.

Finally, the MEA found that there would be no impacts related to exposure of people to excessive noise levels from a private airstrip because the project sites are not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip.

4.10.2 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the project applicant has revised its estimate of construction worker trips and has also reduced its anticipated ceramics production. However, these changes would not alter the MEA's conclusion that project noise impacts would be potentially significant; therefore, these impacts will be addressed in the EIR.

Because the MEA found impacts associated with project proximity to a public or public use airport to be less than significant, they will not be addressed further in the EIR. Also, because the MEA found that there would be no impacts related to proximity to a private airstrip, these impacts will also not be addressed further in the EIR.

4.11 Population and Housing

Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
11. POPULATION AND HOUSING— Would the project:				
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing units, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4.11.1 Summary

The MEA found that the proposed project would result in a population increase of up to 627 persons. The MEA states that the proposed project would result in an approximate 5 percent increase in local population and that the proposed project was not considered within the planning assumptions for the existing General Plan and therefore, impacts related to growth inducement and additional housing demand were found to be potentially significant.

The MEA also found that the proposed project could indirectly displace potential future housing units by changing the land use designation for a portion of the Idaho Maryland site from *Urban Medium Density* residential to *Manufacturing Industrial*, which could result in the permanent elimination of approximately 47 acres of land for residential use. The MEA concluded that the loss of *UMD*-designated land under the General Plan would adversely impact the potential to sufficiently provide for projected increased demand for housing within the City of Grass Valley, and thus, would result in a potentially significant impact.

Finally, the MEA found that the proposed project would not displace existing persons at the project sites because there are no persons currently residing at the project sites.

4.11.2 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to population and housing impacts. Therefore, the EIR will address impacts related to population growth inducement and displacement of housing. As part of the EIR effort, a fiscal and economics analysis will be performed. Because the proposed project would not displace existing persons at any of the project sites, this issue will not be addressed further in the EIR.

4.12 Public Services

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
12. PUBLIC SERVICES— Would the project:				
a) Result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of, or the need for, new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for any of the following public services:				
i) Fire protection?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
ii) Police protection?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iv) Parks?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

4.12.1 Summary

The MEA found that the proposed project could result in potentially significant impacts to the Nevada County and Grass Valley Fire Departments' abilities to provide adequate fire suppression and emergency services because of potential demand for services as a result of mining operations and because of potential indirect increased demand for overall fire services due to the addition of approximately 627 residents. The MEA also found that the proposed project could result in potentially significant impacts to the City of Grass Valley Police Department and the Nevada County Sheriff's Department. While the MEA found that the project applicant's proposed onsite security measures would reduce impacts to police services for mining operations, it also found that based on current service ratios of 1 officer per 260 residents and a projected maximum population increase in City population of 627 residents, the proposed project would generate the demand for 3 additional sworn police officers.

The MEA found that impacts to schools would be less than significant because any increased enrollment at local schools would be mitigated by payment of state-mandated fees and also found impacts to childcare services to be less than significant because the number of children under the age of 5 that would require childcare services as a result of operation of the proposed project would not be significant. Impacts to parks were not addressed in the Public Services section of the MEA because they were addressed in the Land Use and Recreation sections.

4.12.2 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to public services. The project applicant has

since provided additional information regarding proposed mine rescue operations and onsite emergency response. This additional information will be considered and included in the EIR analysis, where general mine safety will be addressed. Impacts related to police and fire services and schools will be addressed further in the EIR. Because impacts to childcare services would be less than significant, they will not be addressed further in the EIR. Impacts related to parks will be addressed in the Recreation section of the EIR.

4.13 Recreation

<u>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</u>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
13. RECREATION—Would the project:				
a) Increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facilities would occur or be accelerated?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.13.1 Summary

The MEA found that because the proposed project would result in a local population increase, the proposed project could result in the increased use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities. The MEA concluded that to maintain the City’s current public parkland ration of 9.76 acres of parkland per 1,000 population, approximately 5 acres of additional parkland would be necessary. Thus, failure to provide additional recreational resources could result in a potentially significant recreation impact.

The MEA also found that the proposed project could conflict with the City of Grass Valley Parks and Recreation Master Plan, which identifies a planned Neighborhood/Pocket Park on the Idaho Maryland site at the end of Whispering Pines Lane.

Finally, the MEA found that the proposed project could conflict with the Wolf Creek Parkway Alignment Study and Conceptual Master Plan. However, the MEA was erroneous in its conclusion that the proposed project would conflict with the Wolf Creek Parkway Master Plan. IMMC’s proposed site plan identifies a 100-foot easement that conforms to the Floodplain Setback Zone in which it is envisioned that the Wolf Creek Parkway will be established and thus, it is unlikely that the proposed project would conflict with this plan.

4.13.1 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA was published, IMMC has revised its plans; instead of a 5,200 square-foot visitor’s center, IMMC proposes to construct a 5,200 square-foot education center and an 114,700 square-foot outdoor historical display/park that would be available to the public on the Idaho Maryland site. The education center would house offices, washrooms, and storage rooms, and an exhibit area that would contain interpretive displays and descriptions of historical and current site activities. The proposed outdoor historical display/park would consist of an outdoor exhibit of historical mining artifacts. Upon reclamation, the Education Center would be made available to the City or the California Department of Parks and Recreation for operation. The EIR will address

the issue of whether the proposed education center and outdoor historical display would be consistent with the City's Parks and Recreation Master Plan in the EIR Land Use and Planning section. The EIR will also address the project's increased demand for additional recreation resources.

As indicated above, the proposed project would not likely conflict with the Wolf Creek Parkway Master Plan because IMMC proposes a 100-foot easement that conforms to the Floodplain Setback Zone in which the Wolf Creek Parkway would be established. However, the EIR will address overall consistency with the Wolf Creek Parkway Master Plan.

4.14 Transportation and Traffic

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
14. TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC—				
Would the project:				
a) Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume-to-capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county transportation commission for designated roads or highways?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location, that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Result in inadequate parking capacity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., conflict with policies promoting bus turnouts, bicycle racks, etc.)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.14.1 Summary

The MEA found that the proposed project would increase traffic volumes on area roadways. While trip generation estimates for project operations at the New Brunswick sites and Round Hole sites were unavailable at the time of the analysis, the MEA anticipated that the total p.m. peak-hour trip generation for the three project sites would exceed (or at least be within 10 percent of) the City's 50 p.m. peak-hour trip threshold for determining when a traffic impact study is required. In addition, the MEA found that traffic-generating construction activities would include trucks hauling equipment and materials to and from the work site, and the daily arrival and departure of construction workers. Because the MEA did not have trip generation estimates for construction activities, it concluded that the EIR would determine the project's impacts using the City of Grass Valley's latest traffic policy/methodology for such evaluations.

The MEA also found that the proposed project could affect traffic safety on area roadways, thus resulting in a potentially significant impact. The MEA concluded that potential traffic safety hazards existed at the Idaho-Maryland site due to reduced visibility for employees accessing the visitor's center coupled with relatively high vehicle speeds on Bennett Street. The MEA also

concluded that large trucks turning from the Idaho-Maryland site onto Idaho-Maryland Road from stop-sign-controlled Centennial way could create a traffic hazard because of the relatively high speed of traffic in that intersection. Thus, although site access characteristics related to traffic safety at the New Brunswick and Round Hole sites had not yet been determined, the MEA concluded that the traffic hazards at the Idaho-Maryland site would satisfy the City's "hazards to public safety" threshold for determining that a traffic impact study is required.

The MEA also found that a potentially significant hazard could result from inadequate emergency site access at the New Brunswick and Round Hole sites. Impacts could also result from an increased demand in parking at all three of the project sites. Finally, the MEA found that the proposed project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns because project construction and operations would extend no higher than 30 to 50 feet in elevation.

4.14.2 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the project applicant has revised its estimate of construction worker trips and has also reduced its anticipated ceramics production. However, the MEA did not use any of these numbers to calculate trip generation estimates; trip generation rates will be estimated as part of the EIR analysis. Also, since the MEA analysis, the applicant has proposed to realign Bennett Road to create a new intersection with the Centennial Drive extension. The applicant has also proposed to add a dirt road at the northwest corner off of Idaho-Maryland Road at the DeMartini property, which would serve as an additional emergency access to the property. Because all of the impacts described above, and in more detail in the MEA, would be potentially significant, they will be addressed in the EIR. As part of the EIR analysis, traffic impacts will be determined using the City of Grass Valley's latest traffic policy/methodology for such evaluations.

4.15 Utilities and Service Systems

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
15. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS—Would the project:				
a) Conflict with wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Require new or expanded water supply resources or entitlements?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that would serve the project that it has inadequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with insufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h) Result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of non-renewable energy resources?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.15.1 Summary

Potable Water

The MEA found that while potable water would not be needed at the Round Hole or New Brunswick sites, project operations at the Idaho Maryland site would result in a demand for approximately 44,000 gallons of water per day. Process water would be taken from mine dewatering and would be recycled; mine water would also be used for onsite fire water systems. Nonetheless, the MEA found that an increased demand for approximately 44,000 gallons of water per day would be significant absent verification from the Nevada Irrigation District that it can and will serve the project's water needs. The MEA also found that approximately 15,000 square feet of landscaped area that would be located at the Idaho-Maryland site would result in a potentially significant water demand impact absent installation of drip irrigation and use of drought tolerant native planting to reduce landscaping water use.

Wastewater

The MEA found that while the proposed project includes an onsite water treatment system to process extracted mine water, wastewater generated onsite from the buildings at the Idaho Maryland site would be treated at the City of Grass Valley's WWTP. The proposed project would result in wastewater generation of approximately 30,000 gallons per day and the MEA concluded that absent verification from the City of Grass Valley Public Works Department stating that it can and will serve the project's wastewater generation, the project would result in a potentially significant impact.

Solid Waste and Recycling

The MEA found that the mill would have a maximum production rate of 3,200 short tons per day (STPD) from gold processing, a maximum of 2,400 STPD of which would be used in the manufacture of ceramic brick, tiles, and building materials. The MEA found that approximately 800 STPD of gold tailings – the difference between mining and ceramic production rates – would be returned underground as backfill. Although the MEA found that the proposed project would generate considerable quantities of solid waste from residual rock from the mine, manufacture of the ceramic products and the backfilling of material would minimize and/or eliminate the solid waste that would require offsite disposal.

The MEA also found that the proposed project could generate approximately 2,400 pounds per day of employee-generated solid waste. The MEA found that the Ostrom Road Landfill in Yuba County would have sufficient capacity to receive solid waste generated by the proposed project but that without recycling, the proposed project could have an impact on the City's diversion rate, which would conflict with the City's required waste diversion rate. The MEA erroneously identified a data gap for information regarding waste disposal at the New Brunswick site; IMMC's application specifies that waste from the New Brunswick site would be removed and moved to the Idaho Maryland site.

Additionally, the MEA did not analyze the solid waste impacts of the approximately 2 tons per year of sludge generated at the Idaho Maryland site and 5 tons per year generated at the New Brunswick site. IMMC proposes to dewater the sludge at the Idaho Maryland site and use it as a colorant for ceramics manufacturing; however, the sludge may be transported by truck offsite to a waste disposal facility. Therefore, the EIR will discuss solid waste impacts associated with the potential sludge disposal.

Energy Use

The MEA found that approximately 150 gigawatt (GW) hours per year of electricity would be required at the Idaho Maryland site and up to 2.1 billion cubic feet per year of natural gas would be required for operation of the ceramics plant. In addition, approximately 20 GW hours per year of electricity would be required at the New Brunswick site and approximately 2 GW hours per year of electricity would be required at the Round Hole site. The MEA found that PG&E can and will serve the project's estimated electricity and natural gas demands. However, the MEA also found that absent implementation of energy conservation measures, the proposed project could

result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of non-renewable energy resources and could conflict with the City of Grass Valley General Plan Objective 6-COSO, which calls for “[a]ssurance of appropriate resource conservation and environmental protection measures as prerequisites to development.”

4.15.1 Project Description Changes

Potable Water

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the proposed project description has changed to include approximately 239,500 square feet of landscape area, an increase of approximately 224,500 square feet from the 15,000 square feet proposed in the original project application. Thus, project impacts related to landscaping water demand would be greater with the new project description changes. Absent installation of drip irrigation and use of drought tolerant native planting, this would be a potentially significant impact and will therefore be addressed in the EIR.

Since the MEA analysis, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to potable water demand for the office buildings on the Idaho Maryland site. IMMC has contacted the Nevada Irrigation District to obtain written verification that the District can and will serve the project’s water needs and NID has provided this written verification to IMMC. However, the EIR will nonetheless address impacts related to increased potable water demand at the Idaho Maryland site.

Wastewater

Since the MEA analysis, the proposed project description has not been changed such that it would affect any conclusions related to wastewater generation at the Idaho Maryland site. IMMC has contacted the City of Grass Valley Public Works Department to obtain written verification that the City’s wastewater treatment plant has sufficient capacity to treat the project’s projected wastewater flows of approximately 30,000 gallons per day; however, IMMC has not yet received this formal verification. Therefore, the EIR will address impacts related to wastewater generation at the Idaho Maryland site.

Solid Waste and Recycling

Since the MEA analysis, the proposed project description has been updated to reflect revised estimates of gold tailings. IMMC now estimates that the mill would have a maximum production rate of 2,400 STPD, rather than the originally estimated 3,200 STPD. In addition, IMMC now estimates that only 1,200 STPD, rather than the originally estimated 2,400 STPD, would be used in the manufacture of ceramic brick, tiles, and building materials. And finally, IMMC estimates that it would use up to 1,200 STPD, rather than the originally estimated 800 STPD, as backfill material. These estimates were changed because the project applicant has reduced its proposed anticipated ceramics production. Regardless of these changes, use of the material for manufacture of ceramic products as backfill material would still minimize and/or eliminate the solid waste that

would require offsite disposal and therefore, solid waste impacts from gold tailings will not be addressed further in the EIR.

Since the MEA analysis, the proposed project description has not changed such that it affects the MEA's conclusion that the generation of approximately 2,400 pounds per day of employee-generated waste would adversely impact the City's required waste diversion rate. Therefore, impacts related to employee-generated waste will be addressed in the EIR. In addition, the EIR will also address solid waste impacts associated with potential sludge disposal.

Energy Use

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the project description has changed with regard to the estimated amount of natural gas usage for the proposed project. IMMC had previously estimated that it would require approximately 2.1 billion cubic feet per year of natural gas for operation of the proposed ceramics plant; IMMC has now revised that estimate to 1.1 billion cubic feet per year. Energy estimates at the Round Hole and New Brunswick sites have remained unchanged. IMMC's reduced natural gas estimate has changed because the project applicant has reduced its proposed anticipated ceramics production. Nevertheless, the use of 172 GW hours per year of electricity at the Idaho Maryland, Round Hole, and New Brunswick sites, and the use of approximately 1.1 billion cubic feet per year of natural gas at the Idaho Maryland site would be potentially significant absent the implementation of energy conservation measures. Therefore, the EIR will address the project's potential to result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of non-renewable energy resources. The EIR will also address potential impacts related to greenhouse gas emissions, and identify mitigation measures, as appropriate.

4.16 Mandatory Findings of Significance

<i>Issues (and Supporting Information Sources):</i>	<i>Potentially Significant Impact</i>	<i>Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation</i>	<i>Less Than Significant Impact</i>	<i>No Impact</i>
16. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE— Would the project:				
a) Have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have impacts that would be individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (“Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have environmental effects that would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4.16.1 Summary

Because the MEA was an informational document and not a decision document, it did not contain a discussion regarding mandatory findings of significance. However, because these impacts could be potentially significant, they will be addressed in the EIR in the respective resource sections.

4.16.1 Project Description Changes

Since the MEA analysis was conducted, the project description has not changed such that it would affect the determination that the above impacts could be potentially significant.

