

**State of California – The Resources Agency**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**



**NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

**PROJECT TITLE: Nelson Sloan Quarry Restoration Project**

The California Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR) is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the Nelson Sloan Quarry Restoration Project (Project) and is preparing an environmental impact report (EIR) to evaluate the potential effects of implementing the project. CDPR would like to know the views of your agency or organization concerning the scope and content of the EIR that is germane to the statutory responsibilities of your agency or organization, in connection with the proposed project including potential project alternatives. If you do not belong to an agency or organization, this notice has been sent to provide you with an opportunity to comment on the scope of the review and to identify important issues you believe should be evaluated in the EIR. A written response to this Notice of Preparation will provide you with the opportunity to identify and discuss these issues. The EIR will evaluate the project-specific and cumulative impacts, identify feasible mitigation measures to reduce or avoid significant project impacts, and identify a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives to the proposed project and describe their comparative environmental effects.

**PROJECT LOCATION**

The Nelson Sloan Quarry property is located on County of San Diego (County) jurisdictional lands in the southwestern portion of the County and encompasses Assessor's Parcel Numbers (APNs) 664-011-05-00, 664-011-04-00, 664-011-03-00, and 664-020-04-00. While the quarry property consists of the four parcels listed above, proposed construction and restoration activities would occur entirely on the two easternmost parcels (i.e., 664-011-05-00, 664-011-04-00) that previously supported an active sand and gravel quarry. The project site is located within the southeastern corner of Tijuana River Valley Regional Park and the site is situated approximately 400 feet south of the intersection of Monument Road and Old Dairy Mart Road (see attached Regional Location Map). Further, the project site abuts Monument Road and the City of San

Diego's (City) South Bay Water Reclamation Plant on the east. The U.S. International Boundary and Water Commission's (USIBWC) South Bay International Wastewater Treatment Plant is located approximately 0.25-mile to the east. Federal lands managed by U.S. Customs and Border Protection are located to the south (the international border fence is located 450 feet south of the project boundary) and County jurisdictional lands are located to the west and north. Border Field State Park, Tijuana Slough National Wildlife Refuge, and the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve are located to the west and north. Interstate 5 and Interstate 805 provide regional access to the project area and are 1.15 mile and 1.9 mile, respectively, east of the project site.

## **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

In 1982, the City approved a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and reclamation plan for a sand and gravel quarry on the project site. Known as the Nelson Sloan Quarry and/or the Border Highlands Pit, the quarry operated for twenty years (1982-2002) and following active operations, the property was sold to the County by the City using grant funding from the State of California Coastal Conservancy. Per the terms of the sale and recorded agreement, the property is to be used in perpetuity for habitat protection and open space. The County and the City have worked with State of California Division of Mine Reclamation to reclaim the quarry since 2002. The Nelson Sloan Quarry project site is currently vegetated with scrub and non-native invasive plants, has a series of informal dirt routes throughout, and a cut slope denoting the transition of past active mining operation into less-disturbed upland regions.

While in the past, the uplands of the Tijuana River Valley have been a location for sand and gravel mining, more recently the area is known for the efforts of government land managers to capture and remove sand and sediment entering the river and estuary from cross-border flows from Mexico. For approximately 15 years CDPR has operated and maintained the Goat Canyon Sediment Basins in the Tijuana River Valley. Located approximately 1.1 mile to the west of the project site, the sediment basins are intended to stop the flow of excess sediment from a highly disturbed canyon in Mexico from impacting the ecology and natural hydrologic process of the Tijuana River and Estuary, and Pacific Ocean. CDPR is also working with the Southwest Wetlands Interpretive Association to remove sediment from the Tijuana Estuary through the Tijuana Estuary Tidal Restoration Program, an on-going effort to restore critical natural functions to the Tijuana Estuary. Additionally, the City, County, and IBWC operate and maintain flood-control channels in the Tijuana River Valley - facilities that not only help to maintain the ecology of the Tijuana River Valley, but also serve to protect from flooding the built infrastructure within the Tijuana River Valley and the communities that live and work in these areas. The majority of sediment excavated by CDPR and other agencies is exported to the City's Miramar Landfill or reused at locations located significant distances from the excavation sites. Annual costs for each agency to maintain, process/sort, haul, and export are significant.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The project consists of the beneficial re-use of excess sediment excavated from flood control facilities and disturbed habitats in the Tijuana River Valley towards the restoration of the Nelson Sloan Quarry. More specifically, excess sediment extracted from flood control facilities, and habitat restoration projects, managed by CDPR, City, County, and USIBWC (and potentially, other stakeholders) that are currently hauled offsite to area landfills, or construction projects, would instead be hauled to the project site for processing and placement to restore the quarry slopes to natural landform and high quality upland habitat. Use of the project site for sediment placement by area stakeholders would ultimately be determined by an Operations and Maintenance Plan and multi-jurisdictional agreement. At this time, members of the agreement are anticipated to include CDPR, the City of San Diego, the County, USIBWC, US Customs and Border Protection, the San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board, the California Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery, and potentially, site operators.

Up to approximately 1,000,000 cubic yards of excess sediment would be hauled to the project site over an approximate 10 to 15 year period. Deposited sediment would be processed at an onsite processing pad/stockpile staging area. In a phased approach, acceptable sediment would then be deposited and re-graded to a stable condition on the slopes of the eastern portion of the project site (i.e., APNs 664-011-05-00 and 664-011-04-00). Erosion and drainage control measures, and revegetation of regraded areas, would also be implemented. Unacceptable sediment would be hauled offsite to a permitted landfill or be used for other allowable and permitted purposes.

In addition to beneficial re-use of excess sediment, habitat restoration, and reduced maintenance costs, implementation of the project would help local communities near the Tijuana River Valley realize multiple benefits. Proposed use of the project site for sediment management and restoration activities (and related long-term habitat protection and open space) would improve water quality within the watershed as well as improve recreational access and quality of life for downstream communities. In addition, the long-term goals of the project include the enhancement of upland habitat on site and riparian and estuarine habitats in the valley, and reduced flooding hazards throughout the valley.

## **POSSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS AND SCOPE OF THE EIR**

The project has the potential to cause significant effects on Aesthetics, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Geology and Soils, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Recreation, Transportation and Traffic, Tribal Cultural Resources, and Utilities and Service Systems.

CEQA requires that the discussion of any significant effect on the environment be limited to substantial, or potentially substantial, adverse changes in physical conditions that exist within the affected area, as defined in Public Resources Code section 21060.5.

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS**

Comments as to the appropriate scope of analysis in the EIR are invited from all interested parties. Written comments or questions concerning the scope of analysis for the EIR should be directed to the contact listed below using full name and address not later than thirty (30) days after the receipt of this notice or by May 16, 2019.

Once completed, the Draft EIR will be made available for a 45-day public review and comment period in accordance with CEQA. Responses will be prepared for all significant environmental comments received and revisions made to the Draft EIR, if any, will be included in the Final EIR to be presented to the California State Parks and Recreation Commission Hearing for review and approval.

Notices associated with the project's CEQA review are available at:

[https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=983](https://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=983)

<http://trnerr.org/about/public-notices/>

## **SCOPING MEETING**

Comments pertaining to the scope of the EIR may also be submitted at the EIR Scoping Meeting that will be held from **6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 30, 2019** at the following location:

Tijuana Estuary Visitor Center  
301 Caspian Way  
Imperial Beach, CA 91932

## **DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION CONTACT PERSON**

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