

4.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

This section describes the existing mineral resources of the Specific Plan Area and evaluates the potential impacts associated with the proposed Specific Plan, both at the individual and cumulative levels.

4.12.1 Environmental Setting

The following sections provide an overview of the physical setting of the Specific Plan Area, as well as the regulatory setting established by the proposed Specific Plan.

4.12.1.1 Specific Plan Area

Mineral resources, such as aggregate material, are necessary to support urban development, as all public and private projects utilize mineral resources for roadway paving, structural elements, and hardscape, including sidewalks, curbing, and gutters. The Specific Plan Area is used for agriculture production contains approximately 20 different soil types including Madera loam, Pachappa fine sandy loam and Grangeville fine sandy loam.¹ According to the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology, there are no known mineral resources located within the Specific Plan Area.²

4.12.1.2 Regulatory Context

This section summarizes key federal, State and City regulations and programs related to the proposed Specific Plan.

4.12.1.3 Federal Policies and Regulations

No federal policies or regulations pertaining to mineral resources are applicable to the proposed Specific Plan.

4.12.1.4 State Policies and Regulations

Surface Mining and Reclamation Act. In 1975, the California Legislature enacted the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA), which, among other things, provided guidelines for the classification and designation of mineral lands. Areas are classified on the basis of geologic factors without regard to existing land use and land ownership. The areas are categorized into four Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs):

- **MRZ-1:** An area where adequate information indicates that no significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that little likelihood exists for their presence.
- **MRZ-2:** An area where adequate information indicates that significant mineral deposits are present, or where it is judged that a high likelihood exists for their presence.

¹ United States Department of Agriculture. Natural Resources Conservation Service, Web Soil Survey. Website: websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app (accessed March 31, 2020).

² California Department of Conservation. 1999. Division of Mines and Geology. *USGS Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Fresno Production-Consumption Region, California*.

- **MRZ-3:** An area containing mineral deposits, the significance of which cannot be evaluated.
- **MRZ-4:** An area where available information is inadequate for assignment to any other MRZ zone.

Of the four categories, lands classified as MRZ-2 are of the greatest importance. Such areas are underlain by demonstrated mineral resources or are located where geologic data indicate that significant measured or indicated resources are present. MRZ-2 areas are designated by the State of California Mining and Geology Board as being “regionally significant.” Such designations require that a Lead Agency’s land use decisions involving designated areas are to be made in accordance with its mineral resource management policies and that it consider the importance of the mineral resource to the region or the State as a whole, not just to the Lead Agency’s jurisdiction.

4.12.1.5 Local Policies and Regulations

The City of Madera does not have any General Plan policies or regulations pertaining to mineral resources.

4.12.2 Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The following section presents a discussion of the impacts related to mineral resources that could result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan. The section begins with the criteria of significance, which establish the thresholds to determine if an impact is significant. The latter part of this section presents the impacts associated with implementation of the proposed Specific Plan and the recommended mitigation measures, if required. Mitigation measures are recommended, as appropriate, to eliminate or reduce significant impacts to a less-than-significant level. Cumulative impacts are also addressed.

4.12.2.1 Significance Criteria

Development of the proposed Specific Plan would result in a significant impact related to mineral resources if it would:

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| Threshold 4.12.1 | 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; or |
| Threshold 4.12.2 | 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. |

4.12.2.2 Project Impacts

The following discussion describes the potential impacts related to mineral resources that could result from implementation of the proposed Specific Plan.

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| Threshold 4.12.1 | Would the project 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? |
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According to the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology,³ there are no Mineral Resource Zones located within Specific Plan Area. In addition, the City's General Plan EIR states that the implementation of the General Plan, which includes the Specific Plan Area, does not have the potential to affect the availability of any State or locally designated mineral resource. Furthermore, the General Plan does not designate the Specific Plan Area as a site containing important mineral resources or mineral resource extraction operations. Therefore, the implementation of the proposed Project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource. As a result, a less-than-significant impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

Level of Significance Without Mitigation: Less than Significant Impact. No mitigation is required.

Threshold 4.12.2 Would the project 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?

As discussed under Threshold 4.12.1, according to the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology,⁴ there are no known mineral resources located within the Specific Plan Area and no mineral resource extraction activities occur on the site. In addition, the Specific Plan Area is not located within an area known to contain locally important mineral resources. Therefore, no impacts related to the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site as delineated on a local general plan, specific plan, or other land use plan would occur as a result of project implementation. As a result, a less-than-significant impact would occur, and no mitigation is required.

Level of Significance Without Mitigation: Less than Significant Impact. No mitigation is required.

4.12.2.3 Cumulative Impacts

The proposed Specific Plan would have a significant effect on the environment if it – in combination with other projects – would contribute to a significant cumulative impact related to mineral resources. The cumulative study area for mineral resources is the City of Madera.

According to the California Department of Conservation, Division of Mines and Geology,⁵ there are no mineral resources located within the Specific Plan Area and implementation of the proposed Specific Plan would not result in the loss of mineral resources. As a result, implementation of the proposed Specific Plan, in combination with other projects, would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact to mineral resources. As a result, a less-than-significant impact would occur.

Level of Significance Without Mitigation: Less than Significant Impact. No mitigation is required.

³ California Department of Conservation. 1999. Division of Mines and Geology. USGS Update of Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the Fresno Production-Consumption Region, California.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

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