# 15

# MINERAL RESOURCES

The Mineral Resources chapter of the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) describes the mineral characteristics of the project site and evaluates the extent to which implementation of the Bohemia Retail project (proposed project) could affect the availability of locally and regionally valuable mineral resources. Information sources for this evaluation include the *Geotechnical Investigation Report for the Proposed Bohemia Residential Development* by España Geotechnical Consulting (See Appendix N), the *Phase I Environmental Assessment* by Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer (See Appendix P), the *Placer County General Plan* (PCGP), and the *Auburn/Bowman Community Plan* (ABCP).

All impacts in the Bohemia Retail Initial Study related to mineral resources were identified as *potentially significant* and are therefore addressed within this chapter (See Appendix C).

#### 15.1 Environmental Setting

The following section presents a description of any known regional and local mineral resources located on-site or near the project.

### **Regional Mineral Resources**

The project site is located in the Sierra Nevada foothills physiographic province, which lies east of the Sacramento Valley. Regional physiographic conditions generally consist of gently to moderately rolling terrain. The subject property is underlain by a mixture of rock fragments originating from volcanic eruptions and volcanic flows that occurred during the origination of the Sierra Nevada. The soils are formed from basic schist and slate, with outcroppings of hard metamorphic rock.

Mineral resources including sand, gravel, clay, stone, and gold, are found throughout Placer County. Sand and gravel are the primary mineral resources currently being extracted to satisfy the demand linked to construction activities. However, extensive gold deposits have been identified near Auburn, Ophir, and Gold Hill.

#### **Local Mineral Resources**

The United States Geologic Survey (USGS) maintains a website (http://tin.er.usgs.gov/mrds/) that provides data sheets containing summary information for mines across California and the United States. According to USGS, active or former mines are not within or near the project site. Figures 9-9 and 9-10 of the PCGP Background Report identifies the existing mineral extraction sites and potential mineral resources sites in Placer County. As shown in Figures 9-9 and 9-10 of the PCGP Background Report, the project site is not identified as a mineral extraction site or potential mineral resource site.

The project site is located in an area likely to contain naturally occurring asbestos. Serpentine rock, which may contain naturally occurring asbestos, was observed during site surveys by España Geotechnical Consulting. Further information on naturally occurring asbestos is located in Chapter 9, Air Quality.

#### 15.2 REGULATORY SETTING

The following section is a brief summary of the regulatory context under which mineral resources are managed.

# **State Regulations**

The primary State law concerning conservation and development of mineral resources is the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975, as amended. California Public Resources Code (PRC), Division 2, Chapter 9, Section 2710, et. seq. includes the SMARA. In 1975, SMARA was enacted to limit new development in areas with significant mineral deposits and to prevent or minimize the negative impacts of surface mining to public health, property, and the environment. According to SMARA, a State Geologist must classify the lands within California based on mineral resource availability.

#### **Local Regulations**

#### Auburn/Bowman Community Plan

The following goals and polices from the ABCP are applicable to the proposed project.

Environmental Resources Management Element

#### Geology

Goal 2 Identify and protect important geologic and mineral resources in the Plan area.

Policy 5 The goals and policies of the Placer County Mineral Resources Conservation Element are included by reference as part of the ABCP.

#### 15.3 IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

This section presents the standards of significance for any potential impacts regarding mineral resources, the methods by which the potential project impacts are assessed, and identifies impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project.

# **Standards of Significance**

The following thresholds of significance related to Mineral Resources are derived from the criteria listed in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines.

Impacts resulting from the project would be considered significant if the project would:

- 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
- 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.

#### **Method of Analysis**

The analysis in this section uses information obtained from the sources listed in the Introduction of this chapter and compares the existing mineral resources and the potential effects of the proposed project on the resources. Conclusions are drawn using the significance criteria listed above and, if applicable, mitigation measures are prescribed.

As stated earlier, all impacts in the Bohemia Retail Initial Study related to mineral resources were identified as *potentially significant* and are therefore addressed within this chapter.

# **Project-Specific Impacts and Mitigation Measures**

The following discussion of impacts is based on the development of the proposed project.

# 15-1 Loss of availability of a known State, regional, and/or locally valuable mineral resource.

The proposed project site is not located within or near known former or active mining operations. The project site is not within a State-designated Mineral Resources Zone (MRZ). As shown in Figure 9-9 and Figure 9-10 of the PCGP Background Report, the project site is not located within an existing mineral extraction site or potential mineral resources site. In addition, the PCGP and ABCP have designated the site for urbanization. Implementation of the proposed project would result in a *less-than-significant* impact to known State, regional, or locally valuable resources as identified in the PCGP.

Mitigation Measure(s)
None required.

#### **Endnotes**

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> España Geotechnical Consulting, Geotechnical Investigation Report for the Proposed Bohemia Residential Development, Auburn, California. December 2004.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Charles Lockwood Consulting Engineer, Inc. Phase I Environmental Site Assessment for Bohemia Parcels APN 052-102-012, -013, -017. June 8, 2004.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Placer County. Countywide General Plan Policy Document. August 16, 1994.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> Placer County. *Auburn/Bowman Community Plan*. 1994 (updated 1999). <sup>5</sup> Placer County. *Placer County General Plan Background Report*. August 1994.