

Re: PDS2015-MUP-98-014W2, PDS-2015-RP-15-001, LOG NO. PDS2015-ER-98-14-016B;  
SCH NO. 2015081025; EL MONTE SAND MINING PROJECT

Dear Heather Steven and Robert Hingtgen:

I submit this comment letter on behalf of myself Billy Ortiz.

The purpose of this letter is to provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the El Monte Valley sand mine. For the reasons below, the DEIR for the Project does not adequately describe the Project and fails to analyze the significant environmental impacts of the Project. Additionally, the project does not propose adequate mitigation measures or alternatives to address those impacts. It is necessary that the DEIR must be revised to permit an adequate understanding of the environmental issues.

The project description fails to address the fact that far more than 12.5 million tons of material would need to be excavated to recover that much PCC aggregate. In fact, at no point in the analysis is the amount of material to be excavated ever identified. "Whatever is necessary" to meet the arbitrarily set goal (which apparently changed often, including within months of finalizing the document) of 12.5 million tons of PCC-grade aggregate is insufficient information to identify the scale of the impact.

Other issues:

Regarding the Golden Eagles, I PERSONALLY HAVE SEEN THESE GOLDEN EAGLES IN THE EL MONTE VALLEY, that forage in the river bottom for snakes, rabbits, birds to survive and raise their young. The DEIR for the Project does not adequately describe the impacts that the project will have on this species listed below. The project does not propose adequate mitigation measures to ensure the protection of this endangered species, ( Golden Eagle ) The Migratory Bird Treaty Act is a Federal law that carries out the United States' commitment to four international conventions with Canada, Japan, Mexico and Russia. Those conventions protect birds that migrate across international borders. A massive project like the El Monte Sand Mine will greatly impact the Golden Eagle by completely removing a vital food source like Rabbit, snakes and birds . ( Golden Eagle, Status-Protected <https://www.fws.gov/midwest/eagle/protect/laws.html> )

Regarding the Peregrine falcons, I HAVE PERSONALLY HAVE SEEN THESE PEREGRINE FALCONS IN THE EL MONTE VALLEY, The DEIR for the Project does not adequately describe the impacts that the project will have on this species. The project does not propose adequate mitigation measures to ensure the protection of this species of raptor. The USDA has this information on the sensitivity of these 2 raptors, (Golden Eagle and the Peregrine Falcon) I would like to emphasize that I have documented both of these species using and foraging in the alluvial areas of the SD river in El Monte Valley in Lakeside CA. <https://www.fs.usda.gov/.../landmanageme.../resourcemanagement/...>

Regarding the Cactus Wren, I HAVE PERSONALLY SEEN THESE CACTUS WRENS, The DEIR for the Project does not adequately describe the impacts that the project will have on this species. The project does not propose adequate mitigation measures to ensure the protection of this species.

Regarding these raptors, I HAVE PERSONALLY SEEN ALL THESE RAPTORS, in the El Monte Valley-The White-tailed Kites, Red-shouldered hawks, Merlin Falcon, American Kestrels, Coopers Hawks, Northern harrier, Zoned-tailed hawk, Red-tailed hawks, Loggerhead Shrike, Great Horned owls, Barn owls, Turkey Vulture, and Bald Eagles that forage in the river bottom of the San Diego River of the El Monte Valley. The DEIR for the Project does not adequately describe the impacts that the project will have on these species. The project does not propose adequate mitigation measures to ensure the protection of these species of raptors.

Regarding the Least-bells Vireos and the California gnatcatchers, I HAVE PERSONALLY SEEN—both protected species, IN THE EL MONTE VALLEY. The DEIR for the Project does

not adequately describe the impacts that the project will have on these endangered species. The project does not propose adequate mitigation measures to ensure the protection of these endangered species. (Least Bells Vireo, Status- Endangered - <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp0/profile/speciesProfile?spcode=B067> (California Gnatcatcher, Status-Threatened - <https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp0/profile/speciesProfile?spcode=B08X> )

Regarding ALL THESE BIRDS, I HAVE PERSONALLY SEEN THESE IN THE EL MONTE VALLEY, the Blue-gray gnatcatchers, Ruby-crowned kinglets, Loggerhead shrikes, California Quails, Mourning Doves, Western Meadowlarks, Western Bluebirds, Scrub jays, Gold finch, Northern flickers, Mocking birds, California Towhees, Spotted Towhee, Acorn woodpeckers, Red Headed woodpeckers, Common Starlings, Killdeer, American crows, Common blackbirds, Anna's Hummingbirds, Rufus Hummingbirds, The DEIR for the Project does not adequately describe the impacts that the project will have on these species. The project does not propose adequate mitigation measures to ensure the protection of these species.

Regarding the Mountain Lion, The DEIR for the Project does not adequately describe the impacts that the project will have on this species. The project does not propose adequate mitigation measures to ensure the protection of this species.

Regarding the Bobcat, I HAVE PERSONALLY SEEN THESE IN THE EL MONTE VALLEY, The DEIR for the Project does not adequately describe the impacts that the project will have on this species. The project does not propose adequate mitigation measures to insure the protection of this species.

Regarding ALL OF THESE MAMMALS I HAVE PERSONALLY SEEN THEM IN THE EL MONTE VALLEY, EXCEPT THE America badger, that I have seen on San Diego River Park Foundation website, The Black-tailed Jackrabbit, Raccoon, Opossum, American Badger, Mule Deer, Wood Rat, Field Mice, Coyotes, Cotton-tailed rabbit, squirrel, Gray Fox, The DEIR for the Project does not adequately describe the impacts that the project will have on this species. The project does not propose adequate mitigation measures to ensure the protection of this species.

Regarding the I HAVE SEEN ALL THE ONES IN PARENTHESIS (Southern Pacific rattlesnake, California glossy snake, San Diego gopher snake, California kingsnake, Red racer, California striped racer), Southwestern threadsnake, (Red diamond rattlesnake), Long-nosed snake, (San Diego night snake), Western black-headed snake, (San Diego ringneck snake, Coast patch-nosed snake), Side-blotched lizard, Orange-throated whiptail, (Western fence lizard, Coronado skink), Coastal whiptail, (Southern California legless lizard, San Diego banded gecko), Granite night lizard, (Blainville's horned lizard, Gilbert's skink Southern alligator lizard, Western toad, Western spadefoot), Baja California treefrog. The DEIR for the Project does not adequately describe the impacts that the project will have on these species. The project does not propose adequate mitigation measures to ensure the protection of these species. Of these I have seen

Also, This scenic corridor will forever be altered if this project is excepted. Think about the Kumeyaay, the current residents both human and animal alike, we will all suffer from dust, pollution, noise, disease, valley fever, cancer. Do you really want to put all our lives at risk? Ruin a beautiful place? It is in your hands, please do the right thing and reject this project.

Sincerely,  
Billy Ortiz  
Lakeside/El Cajon CA Resident