

**REPORT/RECOMMENDATION TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
AND RECORD OF ACTION**

January 28, 2025

FROM

MARK WARDLAW, Director, Land Use Services Department

SUBJECT

Non-Financial Memorandum of Understanding with the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, for the Castle Mountain Mine Expansion Project

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Approve non-financial **Memorandum of Understanding No. 25-90** with the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, for the preparation of a joint environmental document for the Castle Mountain Mine expansion project, effective January 14, 2025, and continuing until a final determination of the project entitlements, project withdraw, or upon termination by either party, whichever date occurs first.
(Presenter: Mark Wardlaw, Director, 387-4431)

COUNTY AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER GOALS & OBJECTIVES

Promote the Countywide Vision.

Create, Maintain and Grow Jobs and Economic Value in the County.

Pursue County Goals and Objectives by Working with other Agencies.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

Approval of this item will not result in the use of additional Discretionary General Funding (Net County Cost). All costs of processing the project application associated with the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are paid by Castle Mountain Ventures (Applicant).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

the Applicant submitted an application with the United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), for an amendment to the Castle Mountain Mine (CMM) Plan of Operation to expand its open-pit gold mining operation (CMM Phase 2 Expansion) on 1,360 acres of federal managed lands. BLM regulates federal lands pursuant to the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 and evaluates land use proposal pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1959 (NEPA). In conjunction with the CMM Phase 2 Expansion application, the Applicant submitted an application with the County to propose changes to its existing Reclamation Plan (Reclamation Plan) to reflect changes proposed in the CMM Phase 2 Expansion project. The County regulates reclamation of both private and public lands within the unincorporated areas in the County pursuant to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 and evaluates mining proposals pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

To avoid the need for preparation of duplicate environmental documents, both NEPA and CEQA encourage lead agencies to prepare joint NEPA/CEQA document that satisfies both statutes.

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The MOU proposes terms to facilitate the coordination and preparation of a joint NEPA/CEQA document and establishes an understanding among the parties of their roles, responsibilities, and participation throughout the planning and environmental review process.

The Land Use Services Department recommends approval of the MOU as it is in the interest of both agencies to effectively coordinate to avoid project delays and eliminate conflicting and duplicative procedural requirements to the extent practicable. Coordination would include, but is not limited to, joint meetings, planning, information sharing, collection and review of environmental and technical data, quality and compliance review of joint draft and final environmental to ensure NEPA/CEQA compliance. This cooperation serves the mutual interest of the agencies and the public.

PROCUREMENT

Not applicable.

REVIEW BY OTHERS

This item has been reviewed by (Jason Searles, Supervising Deputy County Counsel, 387-5455) on November 25, 2024; Finance (Iliana Rodriguez, Administrative Analyst, 387-4886) on December 26, 2024; and County Finance and Administration (Robert Saldana, Deputy Executive Officer, 387-5423) on December 26, 2024.

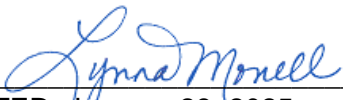
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Record of Action of the Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County

APPROVED (CONSENT CALENDAR)

Moved: Curt Hagman Seconded: Joe Baca, Jr.
Ayes: Col. Paul Cook (Ret.), Jesse Armendarez, Dawn Rowe, Curt Hagman, Joe Baca, Jr.

Lynna Monell, CLERK OF THE BOARD

BY 
DATED: January 28, 2025



cc: LUS - Liang w/agree
Contractor - c/o LUS w/agree
File - w/agree
MBA 02/3/2025