

MINUTE ITEM

This Calendar Item No. 22
was approved as Minute Item
No. 22 by the State Lands
Commission by a vote of 3
to 0 at its 9-24-80
meeting.

CALENDAR ITEM

22.

9/80
WP 5678
Smith
PRC 5678

PREFERENTIAL MINERAL EXTRACTION LEASE
FOR IRON ORE, RIVERSIDE COUNTY

APPLICANT: Kaiser Steel Corporation
Eagle Mountain Iron Ore Mine
Post Office Box 158
Eagle Mountain, California 92241

TYPE OF LAND: School Land - Kaiser Steel owns the acreage
under application with the State retaining
100% of the minerals.

AREA AND LOCATION:
145.43 acres in Section 36 T3S, R14E, SBM
Riverside County. Site is 12 miles northwest
of Desert Center which is halfway between
Indio and Blythe on State Highway #10.

PROPOSAL: As a result of extensive exploration program
under PRC 5678.2 the Kaiser Corporation
has blocked out 14,229,700 net tons of
State owned iron ore. They plan to expand
the existing pit by 60 acres to make it
possible to produce not only State ore,
but deeper ore within the existing pit
limits, which is owned by Kaiser.

PREREQUISITE TERMS:

1. Statutory filing fees and permit fees
have been deposited by the applicant.
2. Royalty for the proposed lease shall
be in accordance with the terms and
conditions of the royalty schedule
approved in Prospecting Permit PRC 5678.2,
as approved by the Commission on June 5,
1979, and are as follows:

A 38

S 75

-1-

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- a. Initial minimum royalty shall be \$0.093 per ton, to be reviewed at the end of each 5 year period of the lease term and if necessary adjusted to an amount equal to 10% of the cost of producing a ton of pit material. The first 5-year period will begin with the date of the first year of production, but no later than 2 years from the effective date of the lease.
 - b. Annual minimum royalty commencing with the first lease year shall be \$20,000.
 - c. The lease term shall be 20 years with two 10-year renewal terms.
3. Applicant has successfully established to the satisfaction of the Staff of the Commission that a commercially valuable ore deposit has been discovered within the limits of the permit area.
 4. Lessee shall furnish and maintain a continuous bond in the sum of \$20,000, guaranteeing faithful performance by Lessee of the terms, covenants and conditions of the lease.

APPROVALS OBTAINED:

1. Subject lease application has been reviewed and approved by the Office of the Attorney General as to compliance with applicable provisions of law pursuant to Section 6890 of the P.R.C.
2. The Commission staff in accordance with Article 10, Section 2905(b) of the Cal. Adm. Code, has conducted an initial study and has determined that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, in compliance with Section 2905(c) of the Cal. Adm. Code, a Negative Declaration was prepared and filed with the State Clearinghouse.

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3. The Negative Declaration was circulated to responsible agencies and agencies having jurisdiction by law. No adverse comments were received to the initial study.

OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

1. This project is situated on State land which has not been classified as possessing significant environmental values.
2. Pursuant to PRC Section 6895, the applicant has a preferential right to a lease of a maximum of 160 acres embraced with the application area.
3. Bases for Royalty Provision

It is common knowledge within the iron ore industry that after selecting the best quality material for economical development, one of the worldwide major problems is to minimize ore transportation costs for local situations. Kaiser Steel Corporation does not sell the crude ore, but crushes it, screens it and beneficiates it before shipping it to its Fontana plant to be used in the manufacture of steel. It is common practice in the mining industry where there is a captive market and no actual sale of crude ore to establish the value of the crude ore f.o.b. the mine as being the cost of mining a ton of ore.

Kaiser Steel Corporation states that if it could mine ore from the State area of mineral interest, which is 2 miles closer to their mill, it could save \$0.38 per ton in hauling charges. This margin of profit, and only this factor, would make it economically feasible to produce the State ore. As a result Kaiser offered the State

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10% of the net \$0.38 savings, or \$0.04 per ton royalty. To put these figures in the proper perspective, the very week that Kaiser made this offer, the Dow Jones broad tape, referring to a recent sale of a major iron ore deposit in Montana, quoted a price of one cent per ton for estimated reserves and two cents per ton for proven reserves with an average iron content of 28%. State lands iron ore has an average iron content of 23%.

Section 6895 of the PRC states that the royalty shall not be less than 10% of the gross value of the mineral production less certain approved charges incurred in transporting and milling said ore, or a percentage of the net profits. With a captive market a net profit royalty agreement is not feasible. As a result State Lands Commission staff in compliance with the code, requested that a determination be made of the value of the crude or f.o.b. the mine, on the cost basis and that the royalty be 10% of that figure. The following are the costs on a per ton basis:

(1) Pioneering	\$.0051
(2) Drilling & Blasting	.1551
(3) Loading	.1800
(4) Hauling	.3541
(5) Supt. & Staff/mine administration	<u>.2271</u>

TOTAL \$.9314
per ton

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Kaiser agreed to the royalty of \$.093 per ton. This figure is equal to 23% of the net savings of \$0.38.

The staff believes that under all the circumstances, the royalty formula of 10% of the value of the crude ore f.o.b. the mine on the cost basis meets the intent of Section 6895.

The above royalty shall apply only to the captive market situation. In the event that the lessee sells, exchanges or transfers ore to any entity not a party to this lease, the State's royalty shall be 10% of the gross value of the ore sold.

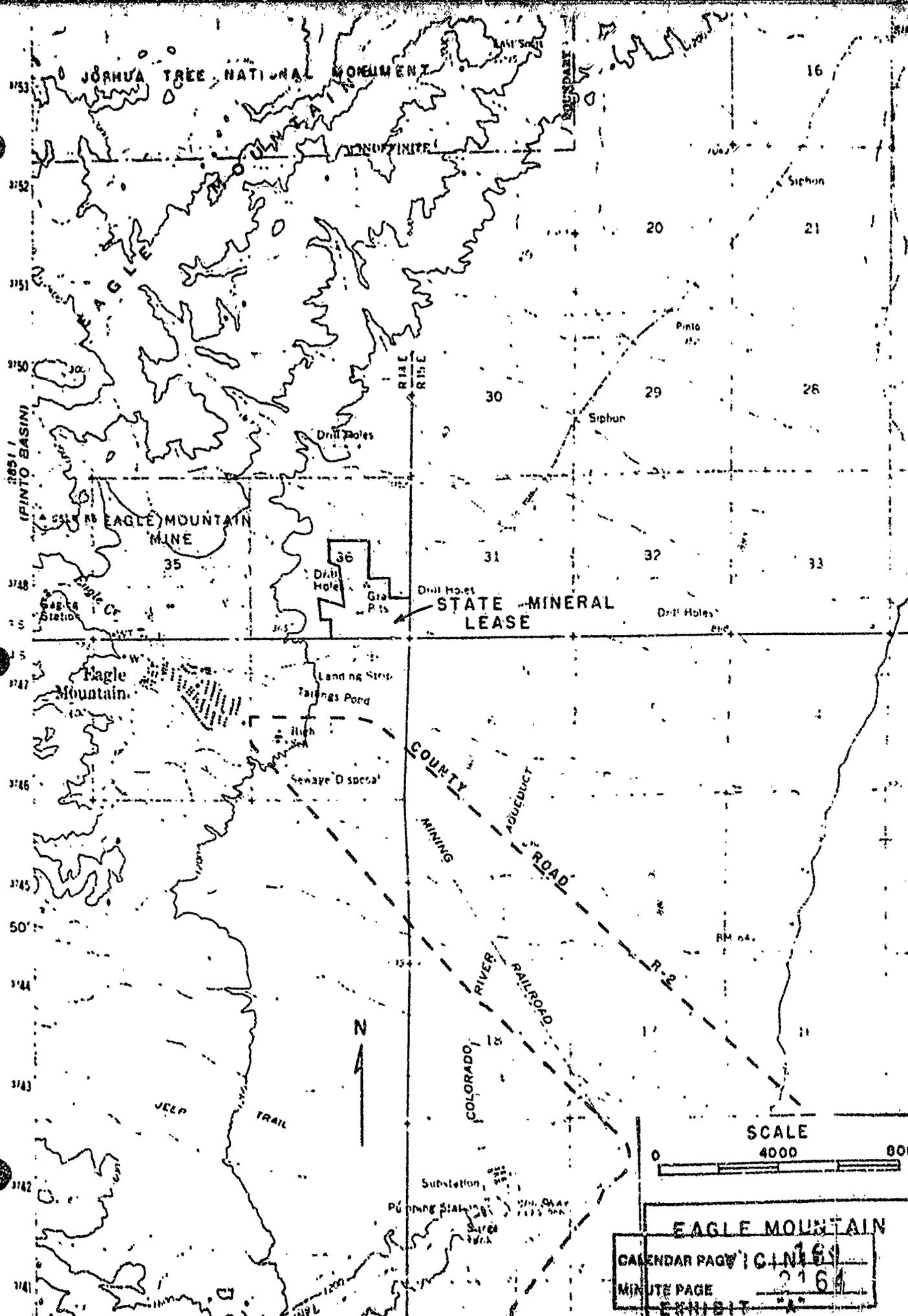
EXHIBITS: A. Location Map. B. Negative Declaration.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE COMMISSION:

1. DETERMINE THAT AN EIR HAS NOT BEEN PREPARED FOR THIS PROJECT BUT THAT A NEGATIVE DECLARATION HAS BEEN PREPARED BY THE COMMISSION STAFF.
2. CERTIFY THAT THE NEGATIVE DECLARATION NO. 275 HAS BEEN COMPLETED IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE CEQA OF 1970, AS AMENDED, AND THE STATE E.I.R. GUIDELINES, AND THAT THE COMMISSION HAS REVIEWED AND CONSIDERED THE INFORMATION CONTAINED THEREIN.
3. DETERMINE THAT THE PROJECT WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.
4. DETERMINE THAT THE LANDS DESCRIBED IN THE PERMIT ARE KNOWN TO CONTAIN COMMERCIALY VALUABLE DEPOSITS OF IRON ORE.
5. AUTHORIZE THE ISSUANCE OF THE PREFERENTIAL MINERAL EXTRACTION LEASE TO KAISER STEEL CORPORATION FOR A TERM OF 20 YEARS, WITH 2 TEN YEAR RENEWALS, FOR IRON ORE ON SW $\frac{1}{2}$ OF LOT 5; LOTS 6, 10, 11; N $\frac{1}{2}$ OF LOT 9; S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{2}$ SECTION 36, T3S, R14E, SBM, APPROXIMATELY 145.43 ACRES; IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE STANDARD FORM OF LEASE; ROYALTY SHALL BE A MINIMUM OF \$0.093 PER TON; AT THE

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END OF EACH 5-YEAR INTERVAL OF THE LEASE TERM THE ROYALTY SHALL BE REVIEWED AND IF NECESSARY, ADJUSTED TO AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO THE EQUIVALENT OF 10% OF THE COST OF PRODUCING A TON OF PIT MATERIAL AT THAT DATE. SUCH 5-YEAR INTERVAL SHALL BEGIN WITH THE DATE OF THE FIRST PRODUCTION, BUT NOT LATER THAN 2 YEARS FROM THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE LEASE. ANNUAL MINIMUM ROYALTY COMMENCING WITH THE FIRST LEASE YEAR SHALL BE \$20,000 PER LEASE YEAR. THE ABOVE ROYALTY RATE SHALL APPLY ONLY WHERE THERE IS NO SALE, EXCHANGE OR TRANSFER OF CRUDE IRON ORE AND/OR BENEFICIATED IRON ORE BY THE LESSEE TO ANY ENTITY NOT PARTY TO THIS LEASE. IN THE EVENT THAT THE LESSEE SELLS, EXCHANGES OR TRANSFERS ALL OR PART OF CRUDE IRON ORE AND/OR BENEFICIATED IRON ORE TO ANY ENTITY NOT A PARTY TO THIS LEASE, THE STATE'S ROYALTY SHALL BE 10% OF THE GROSS VALUE OF SAID ORE, LESS ANY APPROVED COST INCURRED IN MILLING AND TRANSPORTING SAID ORE.



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2851
(PINTO BASIN)

JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL MONUMENT

EAGLE MOUNTAIN MINE

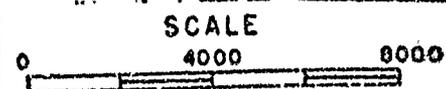
Eagle Mountain

STATE MINERAL LEASE

COUNTY MINING AQUEDUCT ROAD

COLORADO RIVER RAILROAD

DEEP TRAIL



EAGLE MOUNTAIN	
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EXHIBIT	"A"

36

Drill Hole

Gravel Pits

Drill Holes

Drill Holes

RM 04

Substation

PUMPING STATION

WATER TOWER

WATER TOWER

WATER TOWER

WATER TOWER

MINUTE

Siphon

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21

Pinto

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STATE LANDS COMMISSION

KENNETH CORY, Controller
 MIKE CANTRELL, Lieutenant Governor
 MARY ANN GRAVES, Director of Finance



EXECUTIVE OFFICE
 1007 - 13th Street
 Sacramento, California 95814

WILLIAM F. NORTHROP
 Executive Officer

EIR ND: 275

File Ref.: WP 5678

Draft NEGATIVE DECLARATION
 Final

Project Title: Preferential Mineral Extraction Lease

Project Location: SW $\frac{1}{4}$ Lot 5, Lots 6, 10, 11; N $\frac{1}{2}$ Lot 9 S $\frac{1}{2}$ of SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of NE $\frac{1}{4}$; all of Section 36, T. 3 S., R. 14 E., S.B.M., situated in the Eagle Mountain area of Riverside County.

Project Description: A mineral extraction lease to expand the existing Eagle Mountain open pit ore mine by some 60 acres. The mine has been in operation since 1948. The proposed lease area is owned in fee by the applicant with mineral interests reserved to the State of California.

This NEGATIVE DECLARATION is prepared pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (Section 21000 et. seq. of the Public Resources Code), the State EIR Guidelines (Section 15000 et. seq., Title 14, of the California Administrative Code), and the State Lands Commission regulations (Section 2901 et. seq., Title 2, of the California Administrative Code).

Based upon the attached Initial Study, it has been found that:

- the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.
- the attached mitigation measures will avoid potentially significant effects.

Contact Person: Ted T. Fukushima
 1807-13th Street
 Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 322-7817

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INITIAL STUDY

(1) Project and It's Location:

An application for a mineral extraction lease to expand the existing Eagle Mountain open pit ore mine on to 145.43 acres of Kaiser Steel Corporation property described as the SW $\frac{1}{2}$ of Lot 5, Lots 6, 10, 11; N $\frac{1}{2}$ Lot 9; S $\frac{1}{2}$ SW $\frac{1}{2}$ NE $\frac{1}{2}$ of Section 36, T.3 $\frac{1}{2}$. R.14E. S.B.&M. The State owns the minerals only on subject acreage. The Eagle mountain mine is 12 miles northwest of Desert Center which is some 60 miles east of Indio on Interstate Highway 10. Access to the community of Eagle Mountain is via County Road R-2.

(2) Statement of the Objectives Sought by the Proposed Project

Authorize the issuance of a preferential lease to Kaiser Steel Corp. as the result of an exploration program under PRC 5678.1, on some 145 acres, in order to permit the expansion of the existing open pit thus facilitating the continued mining from Kaiser's patented properties and to commence the mining of iron ore from a portion of Kaiser property (Sec 36) on which the State owns the minerals.

(3) General Description of the Project

The iron ore body was discovered around 1900 and Kaiser Steel Corporation began mining its patented claims in the East Pit in 1948. By the end of 1979, a total of $\frac{1}{2}$ billion tons of material had been removed from the East Pit, including 125 million tons of ore. The proposed lease is a 14% enlargement of the existing pit, utilizing some 60 acres of the total 145.43 under application.

Mining will be accomplished by the conventional shovel and truck method. Waste stripping will be done with 12 and 17 cubic yard electric shovels and 100 ton trucks. This process is expected to take the better part of two years. Ore mining will be done with a 6 cubic yard shovel and 10 cubic yard front end loaders. All haul roads to the processing plant and the designated dump areas are within the perimeters of the mine property. No public roads are involved, with the finished ore being shipped by rail.

The pit expansion will be designed with a series of coaxial benches. Waste rock will be trucked from the pit to permanent waste dumps, located in close proximity of the pit. Coarse tailings from the plant are disposed of by trucking or conveying to a permanent dump immediately east of the plant. Some of this material, when needed, is trucked back toward the pit where it is used as a surfacing material along the haulways. These tailings range in size from 1" to 30 mesh. The fine plant tailings, which include materials from silt through clay sizes, are piped in slurry from the plant to a series of sealed and enclosed tailings basins, where the particles are allowed to settle out and the water is reclaimed for plant use. (These basins may be seen in Exhibit A-1.)

A final pit design has been completed, consisting of approximately 22,370,000 tons of total ore and 69,090,000 tons of waste stripping. (Exhibit C) Of the total projected ore, 14,230,000 tons are State ore having an average assay of 22.5 percent iron and 0.02 percent sulfur. Table 1 lists the breakdown, by benches, of the distribution of the State ore. Maximum anticipated depth will be 1800 feet (from elevation 2445 to 645) with a final pit wall slopes of 40 degrees, terraced with catch benches at regular intervals.

In order to maintain a continuous supply of ore for processing, it is planned to mine the area in two mining slices. Slice No. 1 contains 6,824,000 tons of ore and 12,785,000 tons of waste (Exhibit D). Of the total ore in Slice No. 1, 1,093,000 tons are projected as State owned. Exhibit E shows a typical cross section of the final pit showing the relationship between Slice No. 1 and the final mining slice.

The following is an approximate planned mining schedule, subject of course to modification due to changing economic conditions.

(Tons in Thousands)

Year	Ore			Total Material
	Kaiser	State	Waste	
1980	800	0	12,000	12,800
1981	800	300	12,440	13,540
1982	320	630	12,400	13,350
1983	1,500	3,400	17,000	21,900
1984	1,500	3,400	9,800	14,700
1985	1,600	3,300	2,950	7,850
1986	1,620	3,200	1,500	6,320

4(a) Description of the Environmental Setting

a-1 Regional:

Eagle Mountain mine is in a remote and mountainous desert location. Prior to the acquisition in 1944 of patented mining claims in the northern portion of the Eagle Mountains, the area was vacant. Habitation in the surrounding area was limited to a small development at the Metropolitan Water District Pumping Station located about 4 miles south of the mine site and a small settlement of Desert Center located about 12 miles to the south.

Today, Desert Center is still a very small community, however, as a result of the mine development since 1948, Kaiser currently owns a mining community of 416 homes, 185 trailer spaces, and 450 dormitory rooms and apartments, situated adjacent to the mining site. Complementing the community infrastructure are shopping facilities, a bank, recreational facilities, medical-dental-optometric services, churches and schools. The community has 3700 permanent residents with a local school districts serving 1000 pupils from Eagle Mountain and the surrounding area. As the result of all this considerable consequential development has occurred. Businesses, churches, a housing development and trailer parks have been developed to serve the needs of the Eagle Mountain Community. In addition, some limited agricultural development has occurred in the surrounding area.

In spite of the development of the mining community covering + 400 acres nestled against the foothills of Eagle Mountains and the vastness of the open pit, neither the community nor the mine are readily discernable from the Highway at Desert Center so vast is the area and so well does each blend into the surroundings. The area is dominated by the rugged peaks to the north and the west, with the canyons originating on the south flanks, givingway to the vast Chuckwalla Valley to the east.

a-2 Lease Site:

As stated before the lease site lies entirely within the perimeters of the existing mine area, bounded on north by the pit tailing dump, on west by the rim of the existing pit, on the south by the existing small tailing basins and on the east by the open valley. The flora in the area consists of scattered sage and cactus. There are no trees or grasses. The rocky nature of the surface precludes any significant

plant life. The animal life consists primarily of desert lizards, some snakes and occasional coyotes at night. An archaeological assessment was made of the project site by Mr. James D. Swenson, Senior Staff Archaeologist for the University of California Riverside, prior to the exploration drilling program. No archaeological or historic materials dating within the temporal scope of this study were located as a result of the field inspection, with the nearest recorded site being over 5 miles away. A copy of such assessment is on file in the State Lands Commission office.

There are no structures or public access roads to the proposed site, all haulways being within the mine area perimeters on private property and all are carefully monitored by Kaiser Steel Corporation.

4(b) Water Quality Aspects

Permanent surface waters are non-existent in the area. Runoff from occasional rain showers is characterized as sheet or rill wash which collects in shallow, shifting ephemeral stream channels draining toward the Chuckwalla Valley where it is rapidly lost by evaporation and percolation.

Previous drilling in the area has indicated a lack of a water table, also mining in the adjacent pit over the years has not encountered ground water.

Water is derived from two sources. Two wells in the Pinto Basin furnish the potable water supply for the community of Eagle Mountain and the mine. Consumption during 1977 was 990 million gallons. Industrial water requirements are satisfied by four wells in the Chuckwalla Valley, which collectively furnished almost 1.3 billion gallons in 1977.

Rainfall within the Pinto Basin and the Chuckwalla Valley as well as inflow from adjacent watersheds furnish 1.2 billion gallons and 1.8 trillion gallons respectively as potential recharge water for these areas.

(5) Assessment of the Impact

The expansion of the ongoing mining pit will have little or no impact on the environment. The topography will not be changed essentially, since it is a sixty-acre eastward expansion of the existing operating pit on to land privately owned by the Kaiser Steel Corpo-

ration. Waste materials generated from the stripping operation will be systematically dumped on the existing permanent dump sites to the north. Existing mining equipment and mining practices will be employed in the operation.

There will be no effect on the water quality, for water was not encountered in the exploration drilling or in the many years of pit development. Wildlife in the mine area is very sparse, that that exists, has adapted to the ways of the mining operation over the past thirty some years. Vegetation on the subject area is also sparse to non-existent, some scattered sage and cactus, but no trees or grasses. Any vegetation within the proposed pit expansion area will be destroyed.

Economic Factors being favorable, current plans call for the total material production to continue at the average rate of approximately 50 million short tons per year with an anticipated annual production of pellets and iron concentrates of 3.3 million short tons per year. Expansion of the pit would add approximately 2 years to the mine life. Actually anticipated production rates and mine life are almost impossible to project in view of the current economics and will probably be subject to frequent revisions.

(6) Significant Environmental Effects of the Project

There will be no significant environmental effects from the pit expansion. There will be no significant ecological change or changes in population distribution or concentration. The human use of the land will remain as it is now.

(7) Any Significant Environmental Effects Which Cannot Be Avoided If the Proposal is Implemented

None.

(8) Mitigation Measures Proposed to Minimize the Significant Environmental Effects

There are no direct mitigation measures needed as a result of the pit expansion, however, the economics of iron ore mining demands good mining practices to be feasible. Haulway gradients and benches are engineered to reduce energy consumption and equipment wear and tear. Dirt and noise suppression along with slope stability and good safety standards are all factors effecting the overall efficiency of such a mining operation. These factors are constantly monitored and evaluated for means of improvement.

Kaiser Steel Corporation filed a reclamation plan with the County of Riverside in 1978, containing basic mitigation measures for mine abandonment. A copy of this report is on file with the State Lands Commission.

(9) Alternatives to the Proposed Action

There are deeper reserves to the east of Section 36 that could be mined by underground methods, thus avoiding some of the problems inherent in mine abandonment of an open pit mine, however, current economics preclude such underground mining.

The East Pit expansion involves approximately 60 acres which will add about 14 percent to total current acreage of the East pit, a factor in itself that is insignificant.

A no project would result in no further eastward enlargement of the pit. Such an action would not terminate the current mining program, only shorten the mine life.

(10) The Relationship Between Local Short Term Uses of Man's Environment and the Maintenance and Enhancement of Long-term productivity

There are no cumulative and long term adverse effects from the pit expansion except the consideration of eventual mine abandonment. Because of the size of the ongoing project and the existing reclamation plan, the addition of 60 acres will have little influence and can readily be absorbed in the plan of reclamation. All the necessary production facilities are in existence and operational, no other expansion or development of new facilities are needed.

If the projected reserves that would be available for mining as a result of the pit expansion are not mined during the life of the ongoing mining operations, they will probably never be mined. Once the mine has been abandoned it would not be economical to come back at some later date and resume operations. Such reserves are only economical now because of the existing plant facilities and the nearness of the ore to those facilities.

(11) Any Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes Which Would Be Involved in the Proposed Action Should It Be Implemented

Iron ore or any ore deposit is a nonrenewable resource. However, iron ore is not in short supply on either

the domestic or foreign market therefore, there are no irreversible environmental changes in this respect. The commitment of 60 acres of surface area to the pit operation is irreversible, but insignificant when considered in relationship to the size of the existing pit. The very limited surface growth on this area will be destroyed and lost until such time of abandonment, for re-establishment of such growth has been evidenced on the old inactive dump slopes. As plans for mine abandonment proceed, certain portions of the existing pit, where feasible, will possibly be backfilled. Backfilling will depend to a great extent on the program and implementation of a given mining plan at a given point in time. The Eagle Mountain Community is accessible only by a County R-2 road. Again all mine operations and facilities are on patented mining claims and private property. On abandonment of operations, all vehicle access to area of operation will be blocked by rock berms.

(12) The Growth-Inducing Impact on the Proposed Action

The Eagle Mountain Mining Community is an isolated, more or less self-contained community that is entirely dependent up the mine operation for its existence. Although its mere existence has fostered some local development of the area in form of businesses, churches, housing development and trailer parks, it is not anticipated that the proposed project will have any increased influence on the development patterns of the area. The current work force of approximately 1300 people is not expected to reflect any sudden changes. It is hoped that the economic factors are favorable so that current annual projected productions levels may be maintained and the employment future of 1300 people be extended by the added mine life as a result of this project.

(13) Energy Conservation

Kaiser's mining operation in the Eagle Mountain area has been continuous for some 32 years. It has encompassed 8,890 acres (Kaiser's figure) which extended over portions of 2 townships and 3 ranges. (see A-62) In an operation of this size and scope, energy conservation is incorporated into all feasibility studies and is an ongoing responsibility that is constantly monitored and improved as mining techniques and processes change. Haulways are carefully planned for optimum gradient and minimum distances to the processing plant while the surfaces are constantly maintained to avoid wear and tear on the very expensive heavy

equipment. Dump sites are strategically located to minimize haulage distance. Water from the trailings ponds is recycled to the processing plant for re-use. Every facet of the mining operation is by economic necessity, keyed to the conservation of energy.

(14) Organizations and Persons Consulted

This report was prepared by the Staff of the State Lands Commission using their expertise and data submitted by the applicant:

Original Input on the Exploration Program resulting in this project was as follows:

Archaeological Research Unit - University California
Riverside

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, RIVERSIDE

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO



SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH UNIT
(714) 787-3885

RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92521
November 27, 1978

Mr. Ray Waggoner
Division of Energy
and Mineral Resources
State Lands Commission
100 Oceangate - Suite 300
Long Beach, CA 90802

DATE	NOV 29 1978
1 DJE	<i>ER</i>
CFE	
2 ADW	<i>A</i>
RGF	
3 RRW	<i>RRW</i>
4 JAS	<i>JAS</i>
Enc.	
FILE#	N40080

Dear Mr. Waggoner:

Enclosed please find one copy of the following report:

Environmental Impact Evaluation: An Archaeological Assessment of a Portion of the SE 1/4 of Section 36, T3S R14E, SBBM, near Eagle Mountain, Riverside County, California

Sincerely,

James D. Swenson
James D. Swenson
Senior Staff Archaeologist

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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT EVALUATION: An Archaeological Assessment of a portion of
the SE 1/4 of Section 36, T3S R14E, SBEM,
near Eagle Mountain, Riverside County,
California.

by: James D. Swenson
Senior Staff Archaeologist

Archaeological Research Unit
University of California
Riverside, CA 92521

UCRARU #396

for: State of California
State Lands Commission
State Lands Division
Division of Energy and
Mineral Resources
100 OceanGate - Suite 300
Long Beach, CA 90802

November 1978

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The purpose of the study reported herein was to ascertain if and to what extent cultural resources would be affected by the proposed granting of a permit to prospect for minerals other than oil, gas, or geothermal resources on part of the SE 1/4 of Section 36, T3S R14E, SBEM, Riverside County, California.

The study included an archaeological site records check of the California Archaeological Site Survey (CASS) maps maintained by the Archaeological Research Unit, University of California, Riverside (ARU), a review of the pertinent archaeological, historical, and ethnographic literature, and an on-site field inspection to locate and record any possible previously unknown archaeological materials. Temporal scope of the study concerned materials 50 years of age or older.

The subject property consists of open desert flatland lying at the interface of the Eagle Mountains to the east and the Chuckwalla Valley to the west. The property lies adjacent to, on the west side, the ongoing mining activities of Kaiser Steel Corporation, the applicant for the said prospecting permit. Terrain is relatively flat and vegetation sparse enough for 100% ground observation.

No archaeological or historic materials dating within the temporal scope of this study were located as a result of the field inspection. Granting of Prospecting Permit W 40080 will have no adverse direct impacts on cultural resources of the area; and, because of the long distance to the nearest recorded sites (over five miles), no indirect adverse impacts are expected.

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INTRODUCTION

On September 25, 1978, Mr. D. J. Everitts, Chief, Division of Energy and Mineral Resources, California State Lands Division, requested the ARU to review the Initial Study for Prospecting Permit, W 40080, Iron Ore. The result of the review was a recommendation that the approximately 40 acres of the 150 acres involved in the permit application described as "undisturbed desert land" be subjected to an archaeological survey prior to the granting of the permit. Accordingly, on October 18, 1978, Mr. Everitts requested the ARU to conduct the survey. This study was performed in accordance with Section 15066 of the California Administrative Code, Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The project area is located immediately west of the Eagle Mountains and west of and adjacent to the ongoing mining activities of the Kaiser Steel Corp.; consisting of a portion of the SE 1/4 of Section 36, T3S R14E, SBBM, as shown on the Coxcomb Mountains, Calif. 15' USGS quadrangle.

Preparatory work included a site records check and a review of the archaeological, historical, and ethnological literature pertinent to the area under study. As the records gave no indication that the property had been inspected by a qualified archaeologist, an on-foot field survey was performed by the author on October 24, 1978.

The study area is located within the ethnographically recorded territory of the Chemehuevi Indian people; an area extending across the desert of present day Riverside and San Bernadino Counties from the Colorado River to approximately the eastern portion of Joshua Tree National Monument.

No archaeological or cultural materials were observed on the subject property, and it is felt that the proposed use of the land for prospecting activities will have no adverse direct or indirect impacts on mineral resources.

SUMMARY OF CURRENT KNOWLEDGE

Eight previously recorded archaeological sites lie within a ten mile radius of the subject property. Four are located to the north in the Pinto Basin within the boundaries of Joshua Tree National Monument, and four are located to the south on high ground within the Chuckwalla Valley.

Ca-Riv-140 was recorded in 1951 and the site record, although vague, describes it as the Last Chance Mine Site. It is located approximately eight miles north of the subject property in the Pinto Basin.

Ca-Riv-520, 521, and 522 were recorded in 1972. They are described as light surface scatters of lithic waste flakes (struck in the manufacturing of tools) and small bone fragments. The sites are located approximately 5.5 miles north of the subject property in the Pinto Basin.

Ca-Riv-896 is reported as lying 3.5 miles south of the subject property at the Eagle Mountain Aquaduct Pumping Station. Unfortunately, the site record provides no descriptive information.

Ca-Riv-1140, 1141, and 1142 were recorded in 1977 and are described as quarry sites for a fine-grained brown porphyritic rock. Riv-1142 is reported to also contain rock circles. The sites are located approximately 6.0 miles south of the subject property in the Chuckwalla Valley.

Chemehuevi ethnography and culture history is treated with some detail in several published sources. Euler (1966), Laird (1976), and Steward (1938) are the primary ethnographic and ethnohistoric sources. The archaeology and prehistory of the area is dealt with in Hester (1973), Cressman (1977), Campbell and Campbell (1935), and King (1975).

Based on archaeological and ethnographic data, the predicted site density in the region would be rather low; restricted to areas with natural lithic

resources, or to areas where water was easily obtainable.

METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

Work performed prior to the field survey is described above in this report. The field survey was performed by the author on October 24, 1978, and consisted of walking east to west and west to east transects across the property at approximately 30 meter intervals. Special attention was paid to the cuts made by small drainage washes as likely places to locate exposed artifacts.

RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

No archaeological or historical materials dating within the temporal scope of this study were located as a result of the field inspection. Granting of Prospecting Permit W 40080 will have no adverse direct impacts on cultural resources of the area; and, because of the long distance to the nearest recorded sites, no indirect adverse impacts are expected.

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