

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF DRAFT SUPPLEMENTAL EIR FOR THE
USG PLASTER CITY QUARRY EXPANSION AND WELL NO. 3 PROJECT
NOTICE OF PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING**

The Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department intends to prepare a Supplement Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for the United States Gypsum (USG) Plaster City Quarry Expansion and Well No. 3 Project (Project), as described below. A public scoping meeting for the proposed SEIR will be held by the Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department at 6:00 PM on August 11, 2022. The scoping meeting will be held at the Board of Supervisors Chambers, 2nd Floor, County Administration Center located at 940 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243. Comments regarding the scope of the SEIR will be accepted at this meeting. Additionally, comments may be sent to the Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, California 92243, attention Jim Minnick, Director.

SUBJECT: USG Plaster City Quarry Expansion and Well No. 3 Project

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS CONSIDERATION: Summer 2023.

PROJECT LOCATION: The USG Plaster City Quarry (Quarry) holdings consist of 2,048 acres and are located in the northwestern portion of Imperial County adjacent to the Imperial County/San Diego County line. Well No. 3 would be located east of the existing Quarry on a USG-owned parcel (Assessor's Parcel Number [APN] 033-020-009). The proposed pipeline would be approximately 3.5 miles in length and would be developed within an existing right-of-way over an additional 12.7 acres (30 foot wide by 3.5 miles) of land, most of which (7.25 acres) is managed by the BLM. A portion of the right-of-way (3.75 acres) is located within the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. The proposed pipeline would be developed within the existing narrow-gauge railroad right-of-way that is already disturbed by an existing unpaved access road. The approximately 207-acre Viking Ranch restoration site is located 26 miles northwest of the USG Quarry in San Diego County (APNs 140-030-05-00, -07-00, -09-00, -10-00, and -11-00). The approximately 121-acre Old Kane Springs Road preservation site is located in San Diego County approximately 10 miles northwest of the USG Quarry (APN 253-150-34-00).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The proposed project consists of approval of a Conditional Use Permit from the County for the development of a new production well, Well No. 3, and an associated pipeline to provide water to the USG Quarry.

Additional land use entitlements from the County are not needed for mining and reclamation activities under the Quarry expansion. However, because Well No. 3 and the associated pipeline would provide water to support Quarry operations, this Initial Study will evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with mining and reclamation activities under the Quarry expansion, for full disclosure and to provide the appropriate CEQA compliance analysis and mitigation for responsible agencies.

This Initial Study will also evaluate potential environmental impacts associated with the restoration of the Viking Ranch site and preservation of the Old Kane Springs Road site. USG identified the approximately 207-acre Viking Ranch site for restoration and the 121-acre Old Kane Spring Road site for preservation to provide compensatory mitigation for the impacts to 139 acres of water of the United States at the Quarry. Although the Viking Ranch restoration and Old Kane Spring Road preservation will not require entitlements from Imperial County, this Initial Study will evaluate the environmental impacts of these actions for full disclosure and to provide the appropriate CEQA compliance analysis and mitigation for responsible agencies.

DESIGNATED AREA PLAN: The Quarry (including the expansion area), Well No. 3, and approximately 2.5 miles of the pipeline alignment are located in an area designated as Recreation/Open Space; the remaining 1 mile of the pipeline alignment is located in areas designated Government/Special Public; this segment is part of the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

The Quarry parcels (including the expansion area) are zoned either S-2 (Open Space/Preservation) or BLM. The Well No. 3 parcel is zoned S-2 (Open Space/Preservation). The pipeline alignment parcels are generally zoned S-2 (Open Space/Preservation) with one parcel zoned STATE (APN 033-010-016).

The Quarry and Well No. 3 and the associated pipeline are associated with surface mining operations and are consistent with the Recreation/Open Space designation of the Imperial County General Plan. Title 9, Land Use Ordinance, requires approval a CUP to allow surface mining operations on lands zone S-2. BLM and STATE lands are not subject to Imperial County zoning requirements.

The Viking Ranch restoration area is designated Semi-Rural Residential (SR-4) and the Old Kane Springs Road preservation site is designated Rural Lands (RL-40) in the San Diego County General Plan. Both sites are zoned General Rural (S92) in San Diego County. The restoration and preservation of these sites would not conflict with these designations.

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS DISTRICT: District 5, Supervisor, Raymond Castillo.

ANTICIPATED SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS: The SEIR will analyze potential impacts associated with the following: Biological Resources, Cultural/Tribal Resources, Air Quality, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Land Use and Planning, Paleontological Resources, and Hydrology/Water Quality.

COMMENTS REQUESTED: The Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department would like to know your ideas about the effects this project might have on the environment and your suggestions as to mitigation or ways the project may be revised to reduce or avoid any significant environmental impacts. Your comments will guide the scope and content of environmental issues to be examined in the SEIR. Your comments may be submitted in writing to: Jim Minnick, Director, Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243. Available project information may be reviewed at <https://www.icpds.com/planning/environmental-impact-reports/draft-eirs>. Due to the limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but no later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

NOTICE OF PREPARATION REVIEW PERIOD: July 18, 2022 through August 22, 2022.