

# Valle De Oro Community Planning Group Monthly Meeting

## Cottonwood Sand Mining Project Presentation

Tuesday, November 6, 2018 at 7:00pm

Otay Water District Headquarters  
2554 Sweetwater Springs Boulevard  
Spring Valley, CA 91978  
(Training Room/Lower Terrace)

### Notes for Community

#### Attendance

Approximately 10 members of the Valle De Oro Community Planning Group (CPG) were present.

On behalf of the property owner, Michael Schlesinger of Cottonwood Cajon Es, LLC (9663 Santa Monica Boulevard, Suite 974, Beverly Hills CA 90210), Greg Brown of New West Investment Group, Inc. (565 N. Magnolia, El Cajon CA 92020; 619-282-9264) and Warren Coalson, President and Consultant with EnviroMINE (3511 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 403, San Diego CA 92108; 619-284-8515) presented the “Cottonwood Sand Mining Project” to the CPG.

There were more than 100 community members present at the meeting. Unfortunately, the main entrance to the parking lot and buildings at the Otay Water District Headquarters was gated. There were no signs indicating another entrance therefore community members parked along Sweetwater Springs Boulevard. Some members of the community reported through social media that when they arrived at the meeting, they saw the closed and locked gates and assumed the meeting had been canceled and rescheduled due to 11/6/18 also being Election Day. It is unclear how many community members may have been present if the parking area had been well lighted and the gates unlocked.

#### Presentation

Current project summary:

- General Plan Designation – Open Space (Recreational)
- 280 acres in the Sweetwater River Valley/Jamacha Valley
- 198 acres to be mined and 121.8 acres reclaimed by grading or revegetation, removal of invasive species in heavily vegetated areas or be left in the current condition.
- Cottonwood Golf Course consists of two 18-hole courses; the Lakes course (currently not in use) and the Ivanhoe course (would remain operational during first 2 years of project).
- 3 Phases of project – Phase 1 begins on the Lakes course west of Steele Canyon bridge. Phase 2 will occur in the central portion of the site between Steele Canyon Road and the existing golf course Pro shop. Phase 3 will include areas east of the Pro shop.

- A processing plant will be located immediately west of the Pro shop. This is where screening of raw and washing of raw products to remove silt and clay sized particles will occur. No crushing “is proposed”.
- Maximum mining depth is 35 feet below existing ground surface.
- Project will require approval of a Major Use Permit (MUP) and a Reclamation Plan for the mining operations in compliance with County ordinance and CA Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA).
- Commencement of mining would occur within one year of permit approval.
- Mining permit expiration would be December 31, 2032.
- Areas disturbed by the operation will be progressively reclaimed starting in year 2 as mining proceeds to the east.
- Project will be completed in 12 years with mining for 10 years and completion of reclamation 2 years after.
- Post mining land use will be open space, land suitable for development under separate entitlement and recreational trails.
- The MUP would authorize a maximum production limit of 570,000 tons or 380,000 cubic yards of construction grade aggregate (sand and gravel) per year. Material produced will be primarily washed concrete sand, but may also include fill sand, gravel and rock.
- Hours of Operation – sand excavation and processing will occur Monday through Friday between 7:00am and 5:00pm. Trucking operations will operate from 4:00am to 6:30am and from 9:30am to 3:00pm.
- There will be 2 entrances – one on Willow Glen Drive next to the clubhouse and the second will be developed on Willow Glen Drive west of the Steele Canyon Road.
- Daily Traffic Generated – it is estimated, based on production of 570,000 tons per year of aggregate, that there will be 170 heavy truck round trips and 36 light truck round trips each day.

### **Community Comments/Concerns**

Community members shared their significant concerns about Traffic impact to an area already inundated with traffic congestion and problems on Steele Canyon Road and Willow Glen Drive. Members stated this issue cannot be made worse.

Community members shared concerns about the nearby Elementary school on Jamul Drive as well as Steele Canyon High school and the safety issues involved with the high number of children/adolescents walking, biking and driving to and from school Monday through Friday during the hours heavy trucks will be traveling to and from the mine.

Community members shared concern about the biological impact, utilities impact, the noise pollution, serious negative health effects, the effect of property values, and the significant change that will be made to the aesthetics of the environment.

### **Valle De Oro Community Planning Group Comment/Suggestion to Community**

It was described to the community members that the process for approvals is as follows: the local Valle De Oro Community Planning Group, once the developer submits a permit change application to the County, is charged with reviewing the proposed project and making their recommendation (for approval with or without stipulations or disapproval) to the San Diego County Planning and Development Services (PDS) Project Manager who then makes a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors who has the final vote. This process may take one or several years depending on the scope of the project, motivation of the developer/applicant, and community opposition. Community members were strongly urged to communicate their position/comments to the primary decision makers – San Diego County Planning and Development Services and the Board of Supervisors.

### **How Community Members Can Submit Comments**

Comments can be formally shared with the Valle De Oro Community Planning Group which meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00pm at Otay Water District Headquarters, 2554 Sweetwater Springs Boulevard. A subcommittee of the Planning Group will most likely be convened to review the proposed project. The contact person and Chairperson for the Planning Group is David Johnston who can be reached at [djbanker@cox.net](mailto:djbanker@cox.net) or (619) 977-6497.

For Valle De Oro Community Planning Group meeting agendas and minutes, go to:

<https://www.sandiegocounty.gov/content/sdc/pds/gpupdate/comm/vdo.html>

Community comments/feedback can be formally shared with the San Diego County Planning and Development Services (PDS). The current Project Manager assigned to this project is Bronwyn Brown, Land Use & Environmental Planner I at [Bronwyn.Brown@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:Bronwyn.Brown@sdcounty.ca.gov) or (858) 495-5516.

Comments can also be formally shared with the Board of Supervisors:

Greg Cox – District 1, (619) 531-5511, [greg.cox@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:greg.cox@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Dianne Jacob – District 2, (619) 531-5522, [dianne.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:dianne.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Kristin Gaspar – District 3, (619) 531-5533, [kristin.gaspar@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:kristin.gaspar@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Ron Roberts – District 4, (619) 531-5544, [ron.roberts@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:ron.roberts@sdcounty.ca.gov)

Bill Horn – District 5, (619) 531-5555, [bill.horn@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:bill.horn@sdcounty.ca.gov)

### **Submittal of Notes**

Notes submitted by Elizabeth Urquhart, Community Member, as formal community feedback, to David Johnston, Chairperson – Valle De Oro Community Planning Group; Bronwyn Brown, Land Use & Environmental Planner I, San Diego County Planning and Development Services; Greg Cox, Board of Supervisors – District 1; Dianne Jacob, Board of Supervisors – District 2; Kristin Gaspar, Board of Supervisors – District 3; Ron Roberts, Board of Supervisors – District 4; Bill Horn, Board of Supervisors – District 5; and, Community Members through social media (Nextdoor.com, Facebook and Email).