

Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration #2020-003

Lead Agency: Lassen County

Project Name: Hwy 36/Devil's Corral Mine Minor Amendment # 2020-001 and Reclamation Plan #2020-003

Property Owners: Red River Forests LLC

Project Description: Proposal for a Minor Amendment to the vested Hwy 36 Mine and Reclamation Plan for a 9.2-acre construction aggregate surface mine. If approved, the minor amendment would allow for mining on an existing 5.29-acre vested mine in addition to a 3.91-acre spill-over portion not included in the vested right to mine.

Public Review Period: June 16, 2021 through July 16, 2021

Project Location: The project site is in Lassen County approximately 7 miles west of Susanville via State Highway 36 (Hwy 36), near Devil's Corral.

APN: 115-200-055-11, 115-200-032-11

Proposed Findings: On the basis of the attached Initial Study and mitigation measures below, the project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

Proposed Mitigation Measures:

- **Mitigation Measure Aesthetics-1:** Upon completion of mining operations, where forest soils are available, one-year-old Styrofoam-container-grown ponderosa pine plugs from a local seed source and elevation shall be planted at approximately 300 trees per acre with an average of 12-foot x 12-foot spacing. All Styrofoam containers from the ponderosa pine plugs shall be bagged up and disposed of offsite. Competing vegetation shall be controlled around pine seedlings for the first two years after planting to facilitate successful establishment.


Following tree establishment, native herbaceous ground covers shall be allowed to reseed the areas of the site where trees are planted. The success standard surface cover shall be 75 percent with a species richness of 5 species present.

- **Mitigation Measure Aesthetics-2:** All equipment (when not in use), structures, and stockpiles shall be moved to the northern portion of the site (vested portion) to reduce the visual impacts from Hwy 36.

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- **Mitigation Measure Forestry-1:** Approximately 2.5 acres of the site shall be converted to native forbs and grasses and 6.5 acres shall be timberland over the entirety of the site (vested and non-vested portions). Ponderosa pine/Jeffery pine (*Pinus jeffreyi*) plantings shall be planted at approximately 300 trees per acre with an average of 12-foot x 12-foot spacing. Competing vegetation shall be controlled around pine seedlings for the first two years after planting to facilitate successful establishment. The success standard surface cover shall be 75 percent with a species richness of 5 species present.
- **Mitigation Measure Air-1:** A water truck shall be used for dust mitigation and if dust becomes a problem, spray bars shall be installed.
- **Mitigation Measure Bio-1:** Susanville beardtongue seeds shall be collected at the appropriate time of year and stored to be used for reclamation. Flowering species shall be planted at reclamation. In addition, areas of the Susanville beardtongue population shall be preserved onsite to ensure population survival. Those areas shall be marked with earth-toned exclusion fencing.
- **Mitigation Measure Bio-2:** Herbicide shall not be used in areas where the Susanville beardtongue is present.
- **Mitigation Measure Bio-3:** Native wildflowers and native grasses shall be planted to improve foraging habitat for western bumble bees and other pollinators. The selected revegetation palette shall achieve a continuous availability of pollen and/or nectar between spring and fall when foraging habitat is most critical for bees and other pollinators.
- **Mitigation Measure Bio-4:** Overwintering opportunities for the western bumble bee shall be created by placing small leaf and brush piles in the wildflower meadow during mine reclamation in addition to planting bunch grasses.
- **Mitigation Measure Bio-5:** The project area shall be monitored for invasive plant species which, if encountered, shall be removed by hand, bagged, and taken to a landfill.
- **Mitigation Measure Bio-6:** Impacts to nesting birds shall be avoided by completing nest surveys prior to commencing activities that could disturb nesting birds (Shuford and Gardali 2008). Should a site survey detect nesting raptors or migratory songbirds near the project area, appropriate spatial and temporal buffers shall be implemented.
- **Mitigation Measure Noise-1:** Mining, including blasting activities, shall not take place on weekends, holidays or during events on the Bizz Johnson Trail including the Bizz Johnson Trail Marathon.
- **Mitigation Measure Noise-2:** The generator/s shall be placed on the vested portion of the mine site or, if placed on the non-vested portion of the site, a noise study shall be conducted.
- **Mitigation Measure Rec-1:** Warning signs noticing recreators of active mining and prior to the loading of explosives, blasting signs shall be posted and made visible to recreators using the Bizz Johnson Trail.

Signature:


 For: Maurice L. Anderson,
 Environmental Review Officer

Date:

6/15/2021