



Yana Garcia
Secretary for
Environmental Protection



Department of Toxic Substances Control

Katherine M. Butler, MPH, Director
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Gavin Newsom
Governor

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

June 2, 2025

Derek Newland
Planner
San Bernardino County Land Use Services
385 N. Arrowhead Avenue
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RE: MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN BERNARDINO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS ESSEX OVERHEAD QUARRY PROJECT DATED MAY 13, 2025, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER [2025050552](#)

Dear Derek Newland,

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) reviewed the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Works Essex Overhead Quarry (Project). The Project is a Conditional Use Permit and Mining Reclamation Plan to construct the San Bernardino County Department of Public Works Essex Overhead Pit. The purpose of the mine is to develop and utilize a long-term materials source and storage site to provide construction aggregate materials for repair, maintenance, and fill for the local and regional roads (particularly for route 66), shoulders and wash crossings, to facilitate stockpiling and recycling of removed materials, and to support a soils management area. Two pits will make up approx. 47 acres within approx. 90 acres west of the railroad tracks. The remaining property (approximately 197 acres) east of the railroad tracks will remain as undisturbed desert lands.

The proposed Project location is in close proximity to Camp Essex which is located north of Goffs Road/National Old Trails Highway junction. Camp Essex was used by the U.S. Army's 93rd Infantry Division from 1943 to 1944. The property included 19 ranges for different types of military munitions training and is currently identified by DTSC as having potential explosive hazards such as mortars, grenades, small to large caliber munitions and small arms ammunition. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for managing Department of Defense activities at Formerly Used Defense Sites, also referred to as FUDS. More information on the location, history, and investigation of Camp Essex can be found on the DTSC EnviroStor page: [Camp Essex](#).

DTSC recommends and requests consideration of the following comments:

1. Although it is not anticipated that munitions, munitions debris, or other explosive hazards associated with the FUDS site will be identified within the boundaries of the Project site, DTSC recommends performing additional research on the FUDS boundaries in relation to the Project site.
Should a suspected military munition be encountered at the Project site: **Recognize** that munitions are dangerous; **Retreat** — do not approach, touch, move or disturb it, but carefully leave the area; and **Report** immediately what you saw and where you saw it to local law enforcement — call 911.
2. All imported soil and fill material should be tested to assess any contaminants of concern and meet screening levels as outlined in the [DTSC Preliminary Endangerment Assessment Guidance Manual](#). Additionally, DTSC advises referencing the [DTSC Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material Fact Sheet](#) if importing fill is necessary. To minimize the possibility of introducing contaminated soil and fill material there should be documentation of the origins of the soil or fill material or, if applicable, sampling be conducted to assess that imported soil and fill material are suitable for the intended land use. The soil sampling should include analysis based on the source of the fill

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and knowledge of past land use. Additional information can be found by visiting [DTSC's Human and Ecological Risk Office \(HERO\) webpage](#).

3. Be aware of signs of contaminated soil, residual staining, or odors during the construction process and advise collecting appropriate samples for waste characterization. Contact DTSC if further assessment is necessary. DTSC recommends compliance with all applicable or relevant and appropriate environmental laws.

DTSC would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the MND for the County of San Bernardino Department of Public Works Essex Overhead Quarry. Thank you for your assistance in protecting California's people and environment from the harmful effects of toxic substances. If you have any questions or would like clarification on DTSC's comments, please respond to this letter or via our [CEQA Review email](#) for additional guidance.

Sincerely,

Tamara Purvis

Tamara Purvis

Associate Environmental Planner

HWMP - Permitting Division – CEQA Unit

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cc: (via email)

Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation

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