

# Notice of Completion & Environmental Document Transmittal

Mail to: State Clearinghouse, P.O. Box 3044, Sacramento, CA 95812-3044 (916) 445-0613  
 For Hand Delivery/Street Address: 1400 Tenth Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

**SCH # 2025100846**

**Project Title:** Castle Mountain Mine Phase II Expansion Project

Lead Agency: San Bernardino County

Contact Person: Derek Newland

Mailing Address: 385 North Arrowhead Avenue, First Floor

Phone: 909-387-9311

City: San Bernardino

Zip: 92415

County: San Bernardino

**Project Location:** County: San Bernardino

City/Nearest Community: Unincorporated Area, Nipton

Cross Streets: 15 miles southwest of SR-164 and Walking Box Ranch Road

Zip Code: 92364

Longitude/Latitude (degrees, minutes and seconds):      ° 15 ' 44.73 " N / -115 ° 6 ' 59.7 " W Total Acres: 3,288  
 35

Assessor's Parcel No.: 0569-291-21, et al., 10 parcels total

Section: 25 Twp.: T14N Range: R17E Base: San Bernardino

Within 2 Miles: State Hwy #: Nevada SR-164

Airports:     

Waterways:     

Railways:      Schools:     

**Document Type:**

- |                                      |  |   |   |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| CEQA: <input type="checkbox"/> NOP   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Draft EIR      | NEPA: <input type="checkbox"/> NOI            | Other: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Joint Document |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early Cons  | <input type="checkbox"/> Supplement/Subsequent EIR | <input type="checkbox"/> EA                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Final Document                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neg Dec     | (Prior SCH No.) <u>    </u>                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Draft EIS | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>    </u>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mit Neg Dec | Other: <u>    </u>                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> FONSI                | <u>    </u>   |

**Local Action Type:**

- |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Plan Update    | <input type="checkbox"/> Specific Plan            | <input type="checkbox"/> Rezone                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Annexation  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Plan Amendment | <input type="checkbox"/> Master Plan              | <input type="checkbox"/> Prezone                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Redevelopment   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Plan Element   | <input type="checkbox"/> Planned Unit Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Use Permit                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Permit  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Plan         | <input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan                | <input type="checkbox"/> Land Division (Subdivision, etc.) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Mining Revision to Approved Action</u> |

**Development Type:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Residential: Units <u>    </u> Acres <u>    </u>                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation: Type <u>    </u>                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Office: Sq.ft. <u>    </u> Acres <u>    </u> Employees <u>    </u>                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mining: Mineral Gold <u>    </u>                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial: Sq.ft. <u>    </u> Acres <u>    </u> Employees <u>    </u>              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Power: Type <u>Overhead powerline</u> MW <u>0.069</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial: Sq.ft. <u>    </u> Acres <u>    </u> Employees <u>    </u>              | <input type="checkbox"/> Waste Treatment: Type <u>    </u> MGD <u>    </u>                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Educational: <u>    </u>  | <input type="checkbox"/> Hazardous Waste: Type <u>    </u>                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational: <u>    </u>   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>    </u>   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Facilities: Type <u>Underground water pipeline</u> MGD <u>    </u> |   |

**Project Issues Discussed in Document:**

- |  |  |   |   |
|--|--|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Aesthetic/Visual     | <input type="checkbox"/> Fiscal                                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Recreation/Parks                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Vegetation                                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Land    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Flood Plain/Flooding       | <input type="checkbox"/> Schools/Universities                       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Quality                               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Quality          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forest Land/Fire Hazard    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Septic Systems                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Supply/Groundwater                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archeological/Historical        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Geologic/Seismic           | <input type="checkbox"/> Sewer Capacity                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Wetland/Riparian                                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biological Resources | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minerals                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading | <input type="checkbox"/> Growth Inducement                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Zone                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Noise                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Solid Waste                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land Use                                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drainage/Absorption  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Population/Housing Balance | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toxic/Hazardous                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cumulative Effects                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Economic/Jobs        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Services/Facilities | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Traffic/Circulation             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>Cultural, Energy, GHG, Tribal</u> |

**Present Land Use/Zoning/General Plan Designation:**

General Plan: Resource/Land Management, Open Space, and Rural Living. Zoning: Resource Conservation and Special Development Residential. Land Use: Gold Mine

**Project Description:** *(please use a separate page if necessary)*

Please see attached.

Note: The State Clearinghouse will assign identification numbers for all new projects. If a SCH number already exists for a project (e.g. Notice of Preparation or previous draft document) please fill in.

## Reviewing Agencies Checklist

Lead Agencies may recommend State Clearinghouse distribution by marking agencies below with an "X".  
If you have already sent your document to the agency please denote that with an "S".

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air Resources Board	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Office of Historic Preservation
<input type="checkbox"/> Boating & Waterways, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Office of Public School Construction
<input type="checkbox"/> California Emergency Management Agency	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation, Department of
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> California Highway Patrol	<input type="checkbox"/> Pesticide Regulation, Department of
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caltrans District # <u>8</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Utilities Commission
<input type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Division of Aeronautics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional WQCB # <u>7</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Caltrans Planning	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resources Agency
<input type="checkbox"/> Central Valley Flood Protection Board	<input type="checkbox"/> Resources Recycling and Recovery, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> Coachella Valley Mtns. Conservancy	<input type="checkbox"/> S.F. Bay Conservation & Development Comm.
<input type="checkbox"/> Coastal Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> San Gabriel & Lower L.A. Rivers & Mtns. Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Colorado River Board	<input type="checkbox"/> San Joaquin River Conservancy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Santa Monica Mtns. Conservancy
<input type="checkbox"/> Corrections, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> State Lands Commission
<input type="checkbox"/> Delta Protection Commission	<input type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Clean Water Grants
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education, Department of	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Quality
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Energy Commission	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SWRCB: Water Rights
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fish & Game Region # <u>6</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Tahoe Regional Planning Agency
<input type="checkbox"/> Food & Agriculture, Department of	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Toxic Substances Control, Department of
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Forestry and Fire Protection, Department of	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Water Resources, Department of
<input type="checkbox"/> General Services, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Health Services, Department of	<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Housing & Community Development	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Native American Heritage Commission	

### Local Public Review Period (to be filled in by lead agency)

Starting Date April 17, 2026 Ending Date June 1, 2026

### Lead Agency (Complete if applicable):

Consulting Firm: <u>SWCA Environmental Consultants</u>	Applicant: <u>Equinox Gold Corp-Castle Mountain Venture</u>
Address: <u>320 N Halstead Street, Suite 120</u>	Address: <u>980 American Pacific Dr., Suite 102</u>
City/State/Zip: <u>Pasadena, CA 91107</u>	City/State/Zip: <u>Henderson, NV 89014</u>
Contact: <u>Jessica Cleavenger</u>	Phone: <u>702-763-9313</u>
Phone: <u>608-239-5271</u>	

Signature of Lead Agency Representative:  Date: 4/9/26

Authority cited: Section 21083, Public Resources Code. Reference: Section 21161, Public Resources Code.

## **Project Description:**

The proposed Project involves the second major expansion of Castle Mountain Mine (CMM), including installation of an underground waterline and overhead powerline within existing rights-of-way (ROWs) to support the expanded operations. CMM is an existing open-pit gold mine and heap-leach operation located on a combination of private land, owned by Castle Mountain Venture (CMV; Project Applicant), and public land, administered by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Needles Field Office (NFO) in California and regulated in coordination with San Bernardino County (County).

The proposed Project would extend the mine life by approximately 30 years, with 20 years of mining and ore processing followed by 10 years of reclamation and closure activities. The proposed Project would increase the annual mining rate from 22 million tons to 80 million tons. The increased production rate would require up to 2,250 acre-feet per year of groundwater and up to 25 megawatts (MW) of electrical power. To meet these demands, the Project Applicant proposes to construct a 31.5-mile underground water pipeline and a 16.5-mile overhead electrical transmission line. The proposed utilities would be constructed within existing ROWs and would traverse public land managed by the BLM NFO in California and the BLM Las Vegas Field Office (LVFO) in Nevada. The Project Area, which includes the Mine Area, the mine access road, the proposed underground water pipeline, and overhead electrical powerline, and a 50-foot buffer surrounding the water pipeline and powerline, encompasses approximately 4,285 acres and extends across portions of San Bernardino County, California, and Clark County, Nevada. The Project will disturb approximately 3,288 acres within the Project Area, including 1,474 acres of existing disturbance from previously approved development, 1,434 acres of proposed disturbance for the mine expansion, and 380 acres of disturbance associated with the proposed underground water pipeline and 16.5-mile-long, 69-kilovolt (kV) overhead powerline ROWs.

The CMM Access Road was approved under the mine's original BLM Plan of Operations (CACA031137) in 1990, as documented in the Record of Decision for the Castle Mountain Mine Project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS No. 890053; State Clearinghouse No. 88062708) (1990 Plan) (BLM 1990a). When the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 established the Mojave National Preserve, approximately 1,000 feet of the mine's approved access road alignment and proposed utility corridor were included within the Mojave National Preserve boundary. CMV has proposed an alternative alignment that avoids the Mojave National Preserve but would disturb approximately five acres of BLM-managed land.

The proposed Project includes:

- Construction and operation of a 31.5-mile underground water pipeline within a proposed BLM ROW.
- Construction and operation of a 16.5-mile-long, 69-kV overhead powerline within a proposed BLM ROW.
- Increasing the total land disturbance by an additional 1,814 acres.
- Increasing mining by an additional 296 million tons.
- Increasing overburden stockpiling by an additional 196 million tons.
- Increasing crushing rate from six million to 19 million tons per year.
- Increasing the maximum rate of mining by an additional 62 million tons per year.
- Increasing groundwater use from 625 to 2,250 acre-feet per year, an additional 1,625 acre-feet per year.
- Expanding and deepening open pits to greater than 400 feet below the water table.
- Providing up to 500 temporary and 400 permanent jobs.
- Creating an open pit lake that would remain a permanent land feature.
- Extending the mine life to 2060.