

Issue	Less Than Significant or No Impact	Potential Significant Impact Adequately Addressed in MEIR	MEIR Required Additional Review: No Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Impact Due to Mitigation Measures in Project Description	New Additional Significant Impact Not Addressed in MEIR	New Additional Mitigation Measures Required
5.10 Mineral Resources. Would the project:						
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?	■	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	■	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Setting

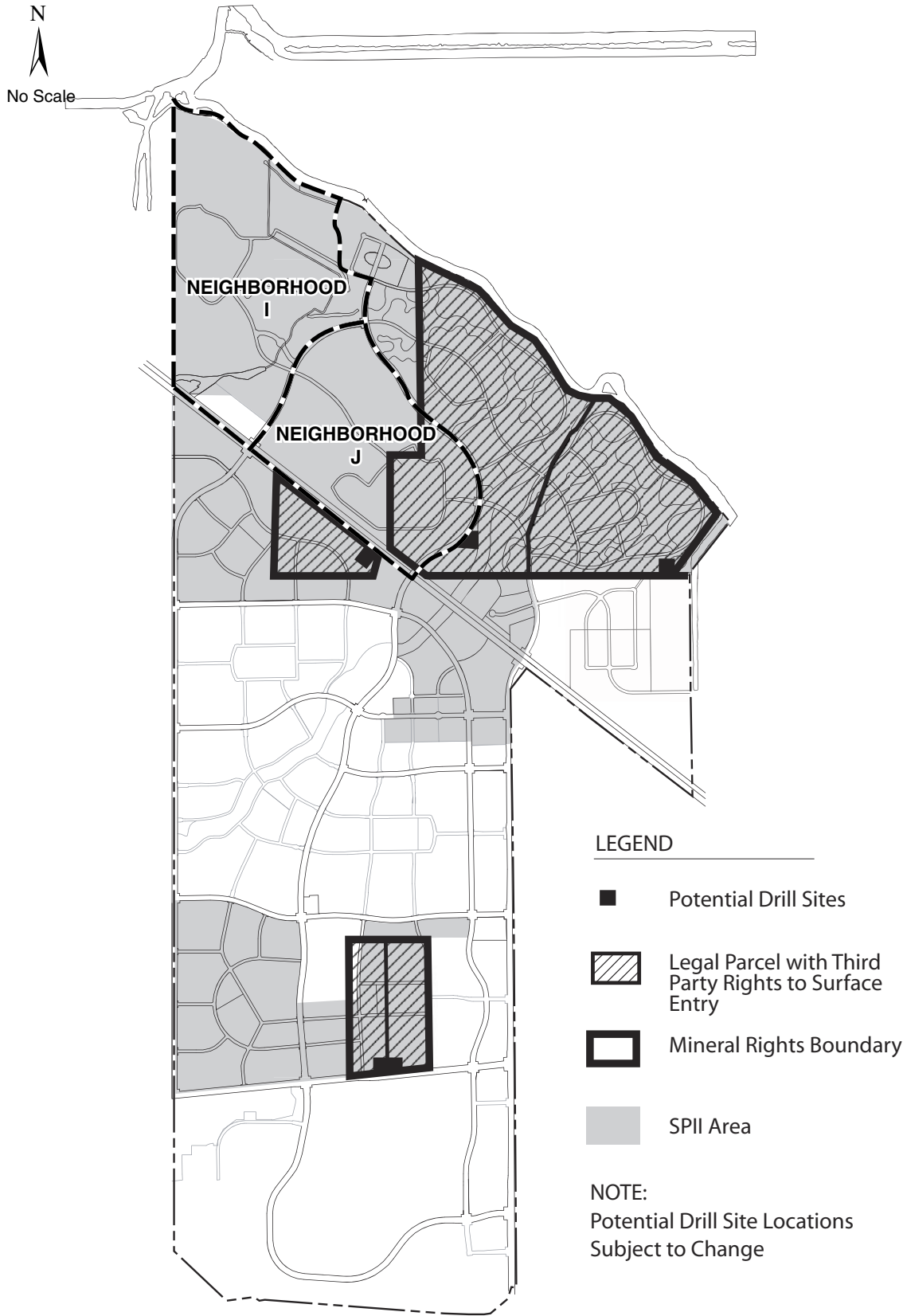
The San Joaquin County General Plan identifies mineral deposits in the County, pursuant to the California Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA). The County General Plan (Figure VI-4, “Significant Sand and Gravel Aggregate Resource Sectors,” and Figure VI-5, “Generalized Aggregate Extraction Sites”) does not identify any mineral resources in the Specific Plan II project area, which includes Neighborhoods I and J.

According to Specific Plan II (Section 3.3.5), however, five of the existing parcels in the Specific Plan II project area have mineral rights with rights to surface access by third-party mineral rights owners. The rights are located in Neighborhoods D, H, J, and L (see Figure 5.10-1). Such rights enable owners to explore and extract mineral resources that may exist below the subject properties. For this area, the resources are likely to be natural gas. The owner of mineral rights in Neighborhood J is not known. According to the State Department of Conservation Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources, wells have been drilled in the Specific Plan II area in the past but have not produced any usable resources (Habel, 2004).

Drill sites are typically one to two acres in size, allowing access for a 6-foot-tall drilling rig structure. As shown on Figure 5.10-1, the mineral rights map indicates that the potential drill site near Neighborhood J would be located on the east side of Central Parkway, just outside Neighborhood J.

Significant Impacts Identified in 1994 MEIR

The 1994 MEIR did not identify any mineral resources impacts for the Master Plan.



SOURCE: SWA 2006

Figure 5.10-1
MINERAL RIGHTS

Findings Related to Significant Impacts Identified in 1994 MEIR

As noted above, the 1994 MEIR did not identify any mineral resources impacts for the Master Plan.

Discussion Regarding Specific Plan II

- a) *Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the State?*

As noted above, parcels within Neighborhood J have mineral rights with rights to surface access by third-party mineral rights owners. Development in this area has the potential to result in the loss of this access. While wells previously drilled in the Specific Plan II area have not produced usable resources, it is reasonable to assume that any natural gas in the area would have some value, particularly in an energy crisis (Habel, 2004). Therefore, development in Neighborhood J has the potential to result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and residents of the State.

Specific Plan II (Section 3.3.5) identifies the parcels with mineral rights and states that “several conceptual surface entry locations have been identified within the area of Specific Plan II” (see Figure 5.10-1). An implementation measure states as follows:

In accordance with applicable law, a surface entry site may be provided on original parcels encumbered by third party surface entry rights to access minerals. To the maximum extent possible, these sites will be located in public areas such as Community Parks, and shall be located to allow convenient vehicular access. Siting criteria will also consider pipeline conveyance routes to existing off-site transmission pipelines. All extraction and conveyance facilities shall specifically be located away from school facilities, and shall to the greatest extent possible, avoid being located within any neighborhood within Mountain House. Drilling and well site operators shall comply with applicable federal, State, County and MHCSD code requirements.

As shown on Figure 5.10-1, all of the potential drill sites would adjoin major roads in the Specific Plan II project area. No conflicts with pipeline conveyance routes to existing off-site transmission pipelines have been identified at this stage. Each of the potential drill sites would be located approximately 1,000 to 2,000 feet away from schools in the Specific Plan II area. All would be located within or next to proposed residential neighborhoods, however.

The State Department of Conservation Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources supervises the drilling, operation, maintenance, and plugging and abandonment of oil, gas, and geothermal wells in California. Before drilling, reworking, or plugging and abandoning a well, operators must file a Notice of Intention with the appropriate Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources

district office. The Mountain House Community Services District (MHCS D) would require encroachment permits for any work within public rights-of-way or MHCS D-owned land. Permits from the local air pollution control district or regional water quality control board may also be required. The Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources typically requires additional safety equipment for wells drilled within 300 feet of residential areas (Habel, 2004). Since Specific Plan II identifies and provides for access and standard State, local, and MHCS D requirements would apply, no additional mitigation measures would be necessary. No drill sites have been identified in Neighborhood I or J.

b) *Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?*

As noted above, the San Joaquin County General Plan does not identify any mineral resources in the Neighborhoods I or J area, but Specific Plan II does identify parcels in the project area that have mineral rights. Specific Plan II provisions along with standard applicable State, local, and MHCS D requirements would ensure access to on-site mineral resources.

Sources of Information

Rob Habel, District Deputy, State Department of Conservation Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources, 2004. Personal communication, June 29.

San Joaquin County, 1992. *General Plan 2010, Volume I: Policies/Implementation*. Adopted July 29, 1992 and amended December 2001.

State Department of Conservation, Division of Oil, Gas, and Geothermal Resources, 2002. "Drilling and Operating Oil and Gas Wells in California." Publication No. PR68.