

401 Water Quality Certification Application

Notification Date:

July 2, 2019

Applicant:

United States Gypsum Company
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Imperial, CA 92251
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Applicant's Representative:

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Project Name:

United States Gypsum Company Expansion and Modernization Project, WDID No. 7A133159001

Receiving Water:

The USG Quarry is identified by the National Hydrography Dataset to be located in HUC12-181002030602. The sub-watershed is 35.314 square miles. Rain waters flow from the Fish Creek Mountains located to the east and south and from the Split Mountain located to the west. Flows move in a north, northeasterly direction forming Fish Creek Wash. The flows eventually enter the Salton Sea located 18 miles northwest of the Quarry.

Location:

Plaster City Quarry: The quarry is located at 7801 Split Mountain Road, Ocotillo Wells, CA 92400. It is in the Fish Creek Mountains in the northwestern portion of Imperial County, adjacent to the San Diego County line. The quarry is approximately 17 miles north of Interstate 8 and 6.5 miles south of State Highway 78. Access is via State Highway 78 and Split Mountain Road.

Quarry Well No. 3 Pipeline: The proposed new quarry water/power line would originate at Quarry Well Number 3 and follow an existing narrow-gauge rail line to the quarry itself. The line would be approximately 20,719 feet long (3.9 miles). The proposed pipeline route is within the narrow-gauge railroad right-of-way, originating at the well site and paralleling the railway to the quarry site.

Replacement Water Line: The 8.77-mile long replacement water line route originates at a well field just south of the Interstate 8 (I-8) freeway in Ocotillo at about 375 feet elevation. It crosses beneath the freeway, and parallels Imperial County Route S80 to the north and east to the existing Plaster City Plant. The water line is primarily within the existing road right-of-way, on the south side of the road.

Canal Water Line: The pipeline route is being evaluated and as an alternative water source to other sources included in the larger USG Modernization and Expansion Project. The alignment is approximately 5.5 miles long and is located between USG's Plaster City Plant and the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) Westside Main Canal to the east. If constructed, the pipeline would be approximately 85 feet south of the centerline of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, within the railroad right-of-way.

Project Description:

US Gypsum proposes to expand and modernize its existing Plaster City Plant and Quarry to accommodate existing and future needs for gypsum products to meet the demands of regional markets.

U.S. Gypsum Company (USG) proposes the expansion of its Plaster City Quarry and upgrades to its Plaster City Plant in Ocotillo to increase permitted gypsum ore reserves and manufacture goods at the Plant to meet market demands. The proposed action consists of three primary elements, and an alternative element for water supply if needed:

- Plaster City Quarry: Expanding and continuing quarrying operations, including quarry reclamation. USG proposes expansion of the quarry areas on 73.0 acres of active unpatented mill site claims on BLM-administered public lands.

- Quarry Well No. 3 Pipeline: A new water line and power line easement to provide water to the Plaster City Quarry from Well No. 3 which is proposed to replace existing Well No. 2. The new pipeline would follow an existing narrow-gauge rail line to the quarry and would be approximately 20,719 feet long (3.9 miles) within a 30-foot wide easement. The narrow-gauge line is owned and operated by USG to deliver raw materials from the Plaster City Quarry to the Plaster City Plant. The proposed pipeline route is partially within the narrow-gauge railroad right-of-way and also impacts 10,480 feet of public lands for which a ROW application has been submitted to BLM.

- Replacement Water Line: A 8.77-mile long water line route originates at USG's water supply wells just south of Interstate 8 (I-8) in Ocotillo at about 375 feet elevation. It crosses beneath the freeway, and parallels Imperial County Route S80 to the north and east to providing water to the existing Plaster City Plant. The water line is primarily within the existing road right-of-way, on the south side of the road. The Proposed Project would include replacement of the existing water line which has exceeded its useful life, by installing a new line approximately twenty feet from the existing pipeline before it is removed.

- Canal Water Line: A 5.5-mile long new water pipeline and associated electric pump station at the Westside Main Canal would be constructed if final approval of USG's Expansion and Modernization Project requires use of Imperial Irrigation District (IID) water at the USG Plaster City Plant, as described in the IID Partial Water Supply Alternative in the EIR/EIS. The alignment is approximately 5.5 miles long and is located between USG's Plaster City Plant and the Imperial Irrigation District (IID) Westside Main Canal to the east. If constructed, the pipeline would be approximately 85 feet south of the centerline of the Union Pacific Railroad tracks, within the railroad right-of-way.

Proposed Schedule (Start-up, duration, and completion dates):

The Plant and Quarry are existing, operating facilities. The mine became active in the 1920's and has operated in conjunction with the plant since 1940. The current request for expansion and modernization was initiated in 2003. Upon approval of all currently requested authorizations, the mining and manufacturing would continue over a period estimated at 72 years assuming maximum production, to the year 2099. This will be followed by approximately 7 years of mine reclamation activities.

Action:

Pending

Water Board Contact:

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