

LATE ADDITION

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
LAHONTAN REGION
MEETING OF JANUARY 11-12, 2017
APPLE VALLEY**

ITEM 3
NEW WASTE DISCHARGE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BLUE EAGLE LODE MINING COMPANY, BLUE EAGLE LODE MINE, MIDDLE BUTTES, KERN COUNTY

*****Please insert the following enclosure to Item 3

ENCLOSURES		Bates Number
5	Letter from Kern County Planning & Natural Resources Department clarifying Kern County's permit timeline, groundwater elevations, and including a diagram of the ore mining block, dated January 9, 2017	3-99

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**PLANNING AND NATURAL
RESOURCES DEPARTMENT**

Planning
Community Development
Administrative Operations

January 9, 2017

Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board
Attn. Doug Smith
2501 Lake Tahoe Blvd.
So. Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

Re: New Waste Discharge Requirements for the Blue Eagle Lode Mine, Middle Buttes, Kern County

Dear Mr. Smith,

This Department is in receipt of the submittal package from your office dated December 6, 2016 (copy of cover sheet attached), hereinafter referred to as the "RWQCB letter".

As you are aware, on November 10, 2016, the Kern County Planning Commission adopted the final Mitigation Negative Declaration (MND) and approved the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for the underground mining and surface reclamation plan requested by the Blue Eagle Lode Mine Company.

Staff offers the following for your consideration:

1) Project lifespan

The RWQCB letter, on page 3-9, states in part: "The mine could operate for as long as 50 years depending upon ore grade and commodity prices."

The MND indicates the mine is estimated to operate as long as 65 years. Specifically, the response to Question 14 of the SMARA Application (Form 175) lists the estimated life of operation as: "Blocks A (2 years), B (2 years), and C (6 years) = 10 years ending March 1, 2027; Deep Central Block, if mined = 55 years ending March 1, 2082". Additionally, the CUP is authorized for a 25-year period, and any requests for additional periods of time shall constitute a formal amendment to the approved underground mining and surface reclamation plan and shall be considered by the Kern County Planning Commission at regularly scheduled public hearing.

2) Groundwater elevation

The RWQCB letter, on page 3-10, states in part: "As of June 30, 2014, the groundwater table varies between approximately 4 feet to 45 feet below the existing bottom of the Shumake Pit."

The MND indicates the bottom of the Shumake Pit is at an elevation of 2,794 feet above mean sea level (amsl). Additionally, the MND states in part that of the three monitoring wells sampled, the most recent measurement date (July 16, 2014) indicated groundwater elevations of 2,792.03 feet amsl for Monitoring Well #1, 2,791.49 feet amsl for Monitoring Well #2, and 2,698.65 feet amsl

for Monitoring Well #3. According to the foregoing data, the groundwater table varies between 1.97 feet to 95.35 feet below the existing bottom of the Shumake Pit.

3) Parameters of underground mining

The RWQCB letter, on page 3-81, provides an image which delineates the parameters of three ore blocks (i.e. Block A, Block B, and Block C). A fourth Block (Deep Central Block) is referenced in the MND, however, the parameters of the Deep Central Block are not delineated on any of the images included in the RWQCB letter.

The Staff Report, prepared for the November 10, 2016 hearing before the Kern County Planning Commission, includes a map which shows the estimated extent of underground mining (Blocks A, B and C), cumulatively listed as approximately 20 acres. A copy of the aforementioned map, which does not delineate any of the Blocks individually, is attached for reference. The proposed project also references the Deep Central Block, however, as the extent of underground mining for the Deep Central block is not as clear, the Lead Agency has apprised the applicant that additional information is needed to affirm that Deep Central Block component is in substantial conformity with the approved CUP.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at (661) 862-8612 or by email at catesr@co.kern.ca.us.

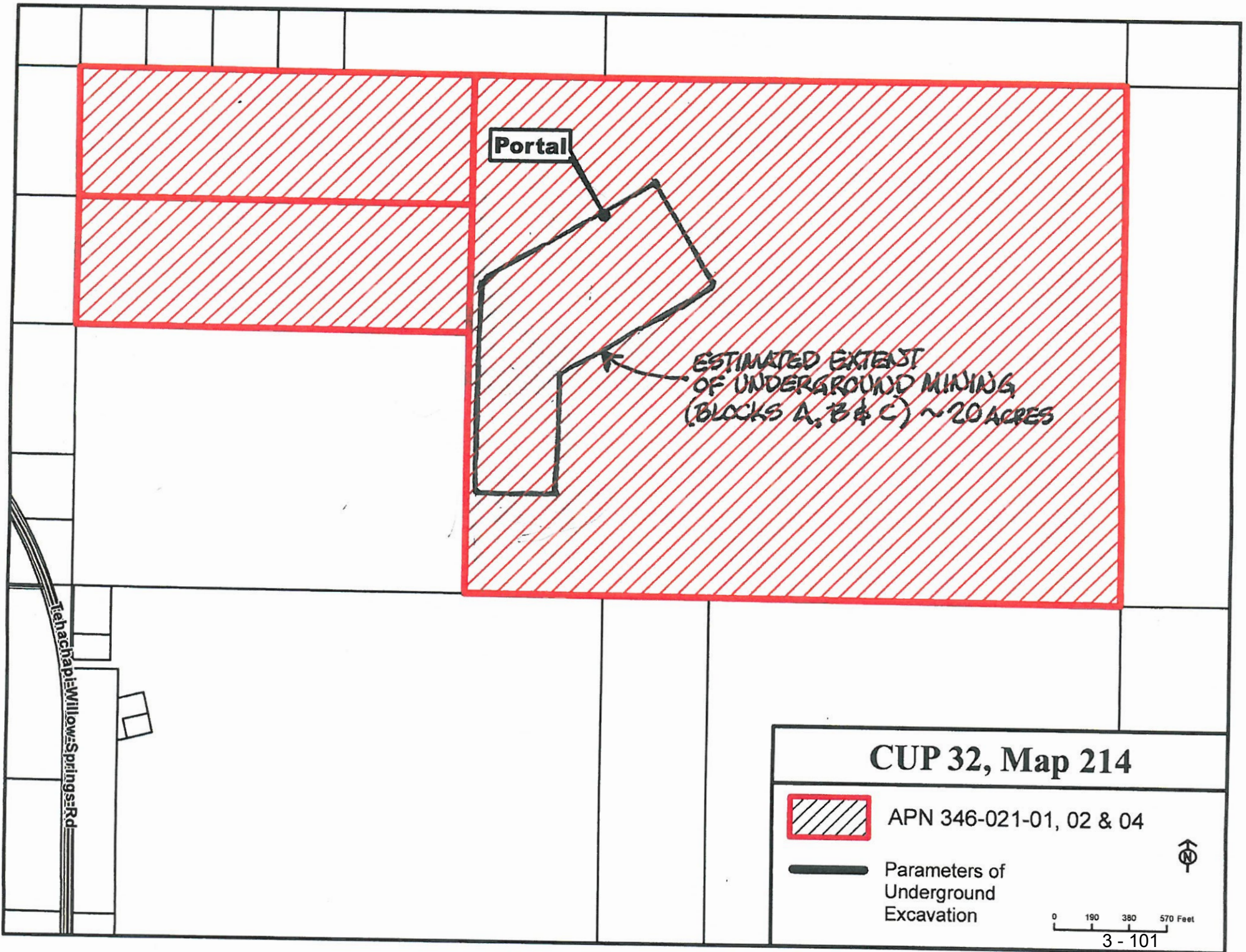
Sincerely,



Randall Cates
Planner III, Advanced Planning Division

Enclosures

Cc: Doug Smith, via email (doug.smith@waterboards.ca.gov)



Portal

ESTIMATED EXTENT
OF UNDERGROUND MINING
(BLOCKS A, B & C) ~ 20 ACRES

CUP 32, Map 214



APN 346-021-01, 02 & 04



Parameters of
Underground
Excavation



0 190 380 570 Feet