

**APPENDIX A**  
**NOTICE OF PREPARATION**

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COUNTY OF SANTA BARBARA

## Planning and Development

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### NOTICE OF PREPARATION/SCOPING MEETING

**TO:** State Clearinghouse  
Governor's Office of Planning and Research  
1400 Tenth Street  
Sacramento, CA 95812

**FROM:** Gary Kaiser, Senior Planner  
County of Santa Barbara  
624 W. Foster Road, Suite C  
Santa Maria, CA 93455

**SUBJECT:** Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report, and  
Notice of Scoping Meeting

**PROJECT NAME:** Shell Guadalupe Beach Gravel Removal In-Lieu Proposal

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The project site is located at 6350 West Main Street, Guadalupe area, Third Supervisorial District. The site is remotely located in the Guadalupe Dunes, between the Gordon Sand Company Processing Facility and the Pacific Ocean (Location Map Attached).

**PROJECT CASE #:** 13EIR-00000-00005

Pursuant to the California Environmental; Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Santa Barbara is the Lead Agency and will prepare a Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) for the project identified above. The County seeks your views, or the views of your agency, as to the scope and content of the environmental information that should be included in the subject SEIR. Agencies comments should be germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the SEIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description and the potential environmental effects for discussion in the SEIR are described in the materials attached hereto.

A Scoping Meeting has been scheduled for **Thursday November 7, 2013 at 3:00 pm**. For the convenience of property owners and residents in the project area, the scoping meeting will be held in the Guadalupe City Council Chambers located at **918 Obispo Street in Guadalupe**. The Scoping Meeting discussion will be limited to understanding the proposed project and associated environmental concerns, including potential mitigation measures and possible alternatives to the project. The attached list of potential environmental impacts identified by P&D staff will be used as a starting point for discussion during the scoping meeting, but other environmental concerns may be raised by the public at this meeting.

P&D staff encourages your participation in this process; please pass on this information to others you feel may be interested in attending this meeting.

Note: The County of Santa Barbara CEQA Guidelines provide that if the applicant requests to review the Administrative Draft EIR (ADEIR), the document must be made available to members of the public. The Scoping Meeting provides an opportunity for others to notify staff if they may be interested in reviewing an Administrative Draft EIR. Interested parties will be contacted by staff if an ADEIR is available.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, **responses from state agencies must be received at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.**

Please send your response to Gary Kaiser, Senior Planner at the address shown above or at [gkaiser@co.santa-barbara.ca.us](mailto:gkaiser@co.santa-barbara.ca.us). Please include a contact person in your agency.

Contact Phone Number: (805) 934-6259

Date: October 23, 2013

cc: Clerk of the Board (please post for 30 days)

Attachments:

- Attachment A -- Location Map
- Attachment B -- Project Description
- Attachment C -- Summary of SEIR Work Scope
- Attachment D -- Location of Gravel

**ATTACHMENT A – LOCATION MAP**

Guadalupe Beach                      General Location of Gravel                      Main Street                      City of Guadalupe



**ATTACHMENT B – PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Shell Guadalupe Dunes Gravel Removal In-Lieu Proposal**

Request by Shell Exploration & Production for an In Lieu Proposal for the Guadalupe Dunes Restoration Project (96-CDP-10). The proposal consists of a monetary contribution to the County for the purposes of providing and/or enhancing public recreational opportunities in the project vicinity in lieu of removing approximately 85,000 cubic yards of remnant gravel. The monetary contribution is offered by Shell as a substitute to Permit Condition #31 of 77-CP-66 and 96-CDP-10 which requires removal of all materials brought into the dunes from the exploratory drilling project as follows:

*#31. All introduced materials on or near the surface (depth of 15 feet) shall be removed when the drilling islands are abandoned.*

The drilling project, originally permitted in 1983, consisted of one drilling island with five wells. Gravel was used as road base to allow for heavy equipment access to the drilling site. The drilling island, known as Site D, was approximately 240 feet west of the existing Gordon Sand Company access road, which is used year round by heavy equipment for access to the Company’s sand pit. The drilling island and wells were abandoned in 1990 in accordance with California Department of Oil and Gas and Geothermal Resources regulations (DOGGR).

All other project materials associated with the drilling site, including drilling equipment, power poles, fences, and pipelines, were removed in 1997 under a 1992 Remedial Action Plan overseen by the County Petroleum Office. Asphaltic material and surface gravel were also removed during the 1997 effort; however, a significant amount of gravel remains because of problems with the screening system used for the removal process. This remaining gravel is the focus of the in lieu proposal for which Shell is offering to provide mitigation funds as a substitute for removing the remaining gravel. The graphic Plan included as Attachment D shows the gravel in four main areas ranging from on the surface to 7 feet in depth. Estimated gravel amounts for the four identified areas; Area D, Area 2, Road, and Upper Area are shown in the following table.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Maximum Estimated Gravel Volume (cubic yards)</b>
D	28,100
2	33,950
Road	10,440
Upper	12,150
<b>Total</b>	<b>84,640</b>

The project is located in the Guadalupe Dunes, addressed at 6350 West Main Street, in the Third Supervisorial District.

## **ATTACHMENT C – PRELIMINARY SCOPE OF WORK**

### **SEIR Scope of Work**

#### Objectives

The primary objective of this process is the preparation of a Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to meet the legal requirements of a complete, adequate, and objective report of the proposed project's environmental consequences. This report is to serve as an informational document for the public and County of Santa Barbara decision-makers. The process will culminate with a hearing during public review of the Draft EIR followed by a hearing before the Planning Commission to consider certification of a Final EIR and act as the decision-maker for the proposed project. The Planning Commission hearing could then be appealed to the Board of Supervisors.

#### Focused EIR Issues

The SEIR will include a discussion that identifies the project setting, applicable thresholds of significance, project impacts and, where a particular impact is potentially significant, mitigation measures that are available to avoid or reduce the impact to the maximum extent feasible. The SEIR will focus on the project's potentially significant and unavoidable impacts. The SEIR will only briefly address issue areas where impacts are thought to be less than significant. Following is a preliminary list of the issue areas where potentially significant and/or unavoidable impacts may occur:

#### **Aesthetics/Visual Resources**

The project site is located approximately 2,000 feet south of the Guadalupe Dunes Beach Park access road (terminus of Main Street), 3,000 feet east of the mean high tide line, and adjacent to the Gordon Sands Company access road. The site is not visible from Main Street, the beach park, or the beach itself as the view sheds are blocked by intermediate dunes. However, the property is owned by the County and is accessible to the public, and/or it may be made accessible to the public in the future. Therefore, the site should be considered visible from public areas for the purposes of the SEIR.

The gravel is visible and unnatural, and it detracts from the natural setting, perhaps to a significant extent. The SEIR must photo-document and disclose visual impacts and explore potentially feasible means of avoiding or reducing visual impacts.

#### **Recreation**

The project site is located on a County-owned parcel adjacent to and part of the Guadalupe Dunes Beach Park. The site has the potential for increased use by the public in the future. Potential recreational uses could include standard beach activities such as hiking, surfing, fishing, and picnicking. Such activities may be significantly limited or adversely affected by the gravel. The SEIR must fully analyze and

disclose potentially significant impacts related to recreation and explore potentially feasible mitigation measures to avoid or reduce impacts.

### **Biological Resources**

The project site is characterized by open sand dunes with occasional patches of primarily native vegetation with some non-native vegetation. The presence of the gravel in the dunes as inert, non-toxic pieces of rock has not caused any detrimental effect on either the flora or fauna of the dunes habitat. The larger particle-size gravel has helped anchor windblown seeds, thus assisting native vegetation to get a foothold in the dunes. The native coastal dune scrub plant community species at the site include dune lupine (*Lupinus chamissonis*), seaside woolly sunflower (*Eriophyllum staechadifolium*), beach evening-primrose (*Camissonia cheiranthifolia* ssp. *cheiranthifolia*), beach-bur (*Ambrosia chamissonis*), and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*). These species have been documented to occur in many of the gravel areas during third party biological surveys conducted in 2008 and noted in recent site visits by County biological monitors. This increase in native vegetation provides habitat for native reptiles and mammals that require cover and protection from the sea breeze.

In addition to the gravel's positive effect on the development of native dune vegetation, the material has been used by snowy plovers in the construction of their nests as noted by federally authorized snowy plover monitors. The larger particle size of the gravels helps protect nests against the persistent sea breeze. Therefore, the gravel in the dunes does not present a significant impact to either the flora or fauna of the dune habitat and has been identified as beneficial in some instances.

The SEIR must fully disclose and analyze whether the project – leaving the gravel in place – would have potentially significant adverse impacts on biological resources and, if so, the mitigation measures that may be available to avoid or reduce those impacts. The SEIR must also quantify and assess the impacts that could if the gravel was to be removed, and the mitigation measures that could be available to reduce impacts.

### **Project Alternatives**

The SEIR shall provide a discussion of Alternatives to the Proposed Project as required by Section 15126.6 of the State CEQA Guidelines.

#### Gravel Removal Alternative (aka No Project Alternative)

The removal of the gravel can be best described as a “mining” type operation similar to a small-scale strip-mine facility; the sand and gravel material would be removed in strips and transported to a process plant, run through a screening system (a photograph of a similar screening system is included as Attachment 3), and the clean sand backfilled into the excavated strip. The process would proceed in a continuous cycle as the gravel is removed from the sand, area by area. The process plant would consist of a double deck, high frequency vibrating screen conveyor belt machine, with the material brought by rubber tire bucket loaders. Water would be used to help push the material through the screening system, the water reclaimed and recycled with the use of a temporary holding pond. Based on previously completed screen tests, throughput of the system is estimated at 130 tons per hour and project schedule of approximately 5 to 7 months to

complete. The gravel that is screened from the sand would be collected in open top bins, transported off site to nearby privately owned ranches and used for road base or other beneficial uses.

The gravel removal alternative would involve noise-generating diesel-fired construction equipment, human presence, fencing, and some vegetation (both native and non-native) removal. As such, this alternative is expected to have potentially significant short-term temporary impacts to the dune habitat. The SEIR must analyze and attempt to quantify both the adverse impacts of gravel removal as well as the beneficial impacts of gravel removal.

Partial Gravel Removal – The SEIR must also explore potentially feasible reduced project alternatives, such as removing all gravel except that which would have potentially significant impacts on biological resources.

**Cumulative Impacts** – The SEIR must consider any other recently approved or planned projects in the area and disclose and analyze cumulative impacts.

**Growth-inducing Impacts** -- The SEIR must consider whether the project would have potential growth-inducing impacts.

**Initial Review of Project Consistency with Applicable Land Use Policies** -- The following policies from the County's Coastal Land Use Program would be applicable to the proposed project. Policy consistency will be analyzed in detail in the project staff report to be prepared for the decision makers, but the SEIR should contain an initial review (for removing the gravel and for not removing the gravel).

**Coastal Act Policy 30251:** *The scenic and visual qualities of coastal areas shall be considered and protected as a resource of public importance. Permitted development shall be sited and designed to protect views to and along the ocean and scenic coastal areas, and, where feasible, to restore and enhance visual quality in visually degraded areas. New development in highly scenic areas such as those designated in the California Coastline Preservation and Recreation Plan prepared by the Department of Parks and Recreation and by local government shall be subordinate to the character of its setting.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 4-3:** *In areas designated as rural on the land use plan maps, the height, scale, and design of structures shall be compatible with the character of the surrounding natural environment, except where technical requirements dictate otherwise. Structures shall be subordinate in appearance to natural landforms; shall be designed to follow the natural contours of the landscape; and shall be sited so as not to intrude into the skyline as seen from public viewing places.*

**Coastal Act Policy 30210:** *In carrying out the requirement of Section 4 of Article X of the California Constitution, maximum access, which shall be conspicuously posted, and recreational opportunities shall be provided for all the people consistent with public safety needs and the need to protect public rights, rights of private property owners and natural resource areas from overuse.*

**Coastal Act Policy 30211:** *Development shall not interfere with the public's right of access to the sea where acquired through use, custom, or legislative authorization, including, but not limited to, the use of dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 7-4:** *The County, or appropriate public agency, shall determine the environmental carrying capacity for all existing and proposed recreational areas sited on or adjacent to dunes, wetlands, streams, tidepools, or any other areas designated as "Habitat Areas" by the land use plan. A management program to control the kinds, intensities, and locations of recreational activities so that habitat resources are preserved shall be developed, implemented, and enforced. The level of facility development (i.e., parking spaces, camper sites, etc.) shall be correlated with the environmental carrying capacity.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 7-6:** *Recreational uses on oceanfront lands, both public and private, that do not require extensive alteration of the natural environment (i.e., tent campgrounds) shall have priority over uses requiring substantial alteration (i.e., recreational vehicle campgrounds).*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 7-22:** *Expanded opportunities for public access and recreation shall be provided in the North Coast planning area. Implementing Actions:*

*b. A hiking trail which provides lateral and vertical access to beaches shall be developed to connect Rancho Guadalupe County Park to Point Sal State Park and Point Arguello or Jalama Beach to Gaviota State Park. The County, with the assistance of the State Department of Parks and Recreation and participation of affected property owners, shall initiate planning studies to determine the precise location and procedures for implementing such a trail. The trail should eventually include hostels and/or walk-in campgrounds where feasible on publicly-owned land; one possible location for such facilities would be an area in the vicinity of Point Conception.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 7-23:** *In order to ensure preservation of the natural and archaeological resources of the Guadalupe Dunes and expand public opportunities for low intensity recreation, the County shall:*

- a. Adopt and enforce an ordinance prohibiting ORV use, hang gliding, and overnight camping on the sand dunes.*
- b. Repair and expand the existing County parking lot.*
- c. Provide more attractive restroom facilities.*
- d. Provide limited picnic facilities.*
- e. Install attractive signs informing the public of the ecological importance and fragility of the dunes and wetland.*
- f. Restrict the County park to low intensity recreational uses, i.e., walking, fishing, and picnicking.*
- g. Provide at least one part-time ranger to enforce rules.*
- h. Pursue alternative methods for expanding the park area south to Mussel Rock.*

**Coastal Act Policy 30240:** *(a) Environmentally sensitive habitat areas shall be protected against any significant disruption of habitat values, and only uses dependent on such resources shall be allowed within such areas. (b) Development in areas adjacent to environmentally*

*sensitive habitat areas and parks and recreation areas shall be sited and designed to prevent impacts which would significantly degrade such areas, and shall be compatible with the continuance of such habitat areas.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 9-1:** *Prior to the issuance of a development permit, all projects on parcels shown on the land use plan and/or resource maps with a Habitat Area overlay designation or within 250 feet of such designation or projects affecting an environmentally sensitive habitat area shall be found to be in conformity with the applicable habitat protection policies of the land use plan. All development plans, grading plans, etc., shall show the precise location of the habitat(s) potentially affected by the proposed project. Projects which could adversely impact an environmentally sensitive habitat area may be subject to a site inspection by a qualified biologist to be selected jointly by the County and the applicant.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 9-2:** *Because of their State-wide significance, coastal dune habitats shall be preserved and protected from all but resource dependent, scientific, educational, and light recreational uses. Sand mining and oil well drilling may be permitted if it can be shown that no alternative location is feasible and such development is sited and designed to minimize impacts on dune vegetation and animal species. Disturbance or destruction of any dune vegetation shall be prohibited, unless no feasible alternative exists, and then only if re-vegetation is made a condition of project approval. Such re-vegetation shall be with native California plants propagated from the disturbed sites or from the same species at adjacent sites.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 9-3:** *All non-authorized motor vehicles shall be banned from beach and dune areas.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 9-4:** *All permitted industrial and recreational uses shall be regulated both during construction and operation to protect critical bird habitats during breeding and nesting seasons. Controls may include restriction of access, noise abatement, restriction of hours of operations of public or private facilities.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 9-5:** *For all permitted uses, including recreation, foot traffic on vegetated dunes shall be minimized. Where access through dunes is necessary, well-defined footpaths shall be developed and used.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 9-34:** *Recreational activities near areas used for roosting and nesting shall be controlled to avoid disturbance to seabird populations, particularly during nesting season.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 9-36:** *When sites are graded or developed, areas with significant amounts of native vegetation shall be preserved. All development shall be sited, designed, and constructed to minimize impacts of grading, paving, construction of roads or structures, runoff, and erosion on native vegetation. In particular, grading and paving shall not adversely affect root zone aeration and stability of native trees.*

**Coastal Land Use Policy 10-1:** *All available measures, including purchase, tax relief, purchase of development rights, etc., shall be explored to avoid development on significant historic, prehistoric, archaeological, and other classes of cultural sites.*

**Coastal Act Policy 30244:** *Where development would adversely impact archaeological or paleontological resources as identified by the State Historic Preservation Officer, reasonable mitigation measures shall be required.*

