

### 2.1 PROJECT LOCATION

The Granite Construction - Rio Del Oro Mining Project (hereafter referred to as the proposed project) site consists of a 1,300-acre proposed mining and processing area, situated within a 2,526-acre parcel owned by Aerojet. The site is located within the city limits of Rancho Cordova, directly adjacent and south of White Rock Road, approximately 4,800 feet east of Sunrise Boulevard and approximately 5,100 feet north of Douglas Road. The project's regional and local location is shown in **Figures 1 and 2**.

### 2.2 EXISTING SITE CONDITION AND SURROUNDING LAND USES

The project site currently consists of rows of mine tailing piles interspersed with some vegetation and trees. On-site vegetation consists mainly of non-native grasses and some limited willows, cottonwoods, and other non-native trees. Portions of the project site contain elderberry shrubs and other potential habitat for special-status species. Some limited wetlands are located on-site. For a full description of these features, see Section 3.0.

The proposed project is located immediately south of the Aerojet operational area to the north. Located immediately adjacent to the project to the west is an existing aggregate mining operation currently being conducted by Teichert (as a separate project). A material transport conveyor traverses the project site from west to east. This elevated conveyor transports aggregate material mined by Teichert in the west to their processing facility across Grant Line Road in the east. Additional mining, also being conducted by Teichert is located to the east of the proposed project. Cattle grazing is being conducted both on portions of the project site as well as immediately to the south of the project site. Further south is Douglas Road, across which lies previously developed homes in the Sunridge Specific Plan area.

### 2.3 PROJECT PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

The owner of the project site, Aerojet, plans to eventually develop the project site for industrial, commercial, and residential land uses. This development will be undertaken by GenCorp, Realty Investments (GenCorp). Such development was assumed in the General Plan and the GP-EIR. Prior to this development, mine tailings found on much of the land are available for removal, processing, and use in various roadway and development projects in the region. Mine tailings consist largely of large cobbles and other aggregate material suitable for processing and use in paving and manufacture of construction materials. Aerojet will allow Granite Construction to remove the aggregate material and process it for use in local and regional construction projects. In addition to removing the aggregate material in preparation for development, Granite Construction will restore the topography of the site to roughly the same condition which existed prior to dredge mining of the site.

The reclamation of aggregate resources on the project site and the future development of the land by GenCorp are independent actions. Mining activities conducted as part of the proposed project would still occur regardless of whether development of the Rio Del Oro area by GenCorp occurs or not. Conversely, development of the project area by GenCorp can occur independently of the proposed project. Therefore, the following analysis concerns only the expected environmental effects of the mining and processing of aggregate resources.

The environmental effects of GenCorp's development of the project site have been analyzed in an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Rio Del Oro Specific Plan (State Clearinghouse Number 2003122057). The Rio Del Oro Draft

## 2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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EIR/EIS was prepared jointly by the City and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Draft EIR/EIS was released for public comment on December 8, 2006. The public comment period ended on February 5, 2007. The City of Rancho Cordova is currently considering approval of the Rio Del Oro Specific Plan and the associated plans and entitlements. The consideration of the Rio Del Oro Specific Plan is being considered separately from the proposed project.

### 2.4 PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS

The project proposes the mining, processing, and export of tailings which were created by previous gold dredge mining operations on the project site. The tailings that are present consist of cobbles intermixed with sand and gravel, and vary from 5 to 75 feet in height with typical base widths ranging from 100 to 300 feet. The majority of dredge piles on the project site do not typically exceed 20 feet above the dredge valleys with some sporadic piles reaching the maximum height of 75 feet. Approximately 600 acres of the 1,300-acre site is expected to be disturbed (see **Figure 2**); however, the actual disturbed acreage may be greater or less, depending on aggregate availability and market conditions. The proposed operation will remove and process these mounds using typical earthmoving equipment (graders, loaders, etc.). After mining, the project proponent will restore elevations similar to the natural elevation of the site that existed prior to the previous gold dredging operations. Some or all of the material mined from the site may be processed by a portable crushing and screening plant that will work its way across the project site as the operation progresses (see **Figure 3**). Material from the site will be loaded into transport trucks and weighed at an on-site scale house, located at an on-site staging and sales area (see **Figure 4**) before entering onto either Douglas Road or White Rock Road. The excess screened fine aggregate material may be used to reclaim some of the excavation areas.

The project is anticipated to last ten years, depending on the status of the proposed urban development of the site and issuance of required permits and approvals. Approximately 5 to 11 million cubic yards are expected to be mined over the duration of the project. Between 30 and 50 percent of the mined and processed material may be used for on-site reclamation activities, if not sold off-site. Due to the presence of sensitive environmental resources on-site, the proposed project will be phased. Phase I would consist of mining of all portions of the site without existing environmental resources such as elderberry bushes or wetlands. During Phase I, no operations or site disturbance will occur within 100 feet of any such environmental resources. Phase II would consist of mining of those portions of the site excluded from mining during Phase I after all required permits and consultations have been acquired and all other mitigation required by both this document and other agencies has been incorporated into the project. Portions of the project site to be avoided until such time as appropriate mitigation has been implemented are shown on **Figure 5**.

As previously mentioned, portions of the mined material may be used for on-site reclamation. Reclamation grades will typically correspond to predicted future development grading elevations. After the proposed mining and reclamation activities are complete, the project site will remain undeveloped open space and will continue to be used for seasonal cattle grazing until such time as development of the Rio Del Oro Specific Plan begins (if approved by the City Council).

### 2.5 REQUIRED PROJECT APPROVALS

The applicant is requesting approval of an Aerojet Special Planning Area (SPA) Implementation Permit and a Reclamation Plan to allow for surface mining and the commencement of

processing operations on the site. In addition to the approval of the proposed project by the City Council of the City of Rancho Cordova, the following agency approvals may be required (depending on the final project design):

- 1) California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)
- 2) California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC)
- 3) Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQB)
- 4) Sacramento County Water Agency (SCWA)
- 5) Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD)
- 6) Sacramento Resource Conservation District (SRCD)
- 7) U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
- 8) U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)