



**CEQA and COASTAL DETERMINATIONS
and
NOTICE OF APPROVAL**

Project: Lease to Searles Valley Minerals, Inc.
Location: Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal, 1090 Water Street, San Diego, CA 92101
Parcel No.: 020-031
Project No.: 2017-194a
Applicant: David Goins, Director – Distribution Services, Searles Valley Minerals Operations, Inc., 13200 Main Street, Trona, CA 93562
Date Approved: January 14, 2020

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is an extension of an existing short-term lease to Searles Valley Minerals, Inc. (Tenant) for their continued use of approximately 145,635 square feet of tideland area and approximately 15,282 square feet of conveyor air space area located at 1090 Water Street at the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal (TAMT) located in the city of San Diego, California. The area proposed for use under this short-term lease is currently and is proposed to be used only and exclusively for the purpose of importation, storing, and export of dry bulk commodities including soda ash, potash, sodium bicarbonate, borates, saltcake, and other similar nontoxic, nonhazardous dry bulk products for no other purpose whatsoever. The Tenant would be responsible for compliance with all laws and regulations associated with the activities on or in connection with the above-described premises.

The storage and distribution of the dry bulk commodities by the Tenant was contemplated and analyzed as part of Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal Redevelopment Plan and Demolition and Initial Rail Component Project (TAMT Program) (UPD EIR 2015-39; SCH # 2015-031046). The TAMT Program FEIR, adopted by the San Diego Unified Port District (District) on December 13, 2016, established a baseline for dry bulk commodities for the entire TAMT of 289,864 metric tons (Baseline Dry Bulk). The short-term lease stipulates that the Tenant maximum annual throughput shall not exceed fifty-one thousand five hundred seventy (51,570) metric tons of dry bulk commodities per calendar year at District marine terminal facilities unless there is remaining capacity available that would not allow an exceedance of the Baseline Dry Bulk (289,864 metric tons) at TAMT.

As part of the TAMT Program FEIR, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) was adopted in accordance with Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21081.6 and Section 15097 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines. The purpose of the MMRP is to ensure that activities envisioned in the TAMT Program FEIR comply with all applicable environmental mitigation requirements. Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 requires the Lead Agency, for each project that is subject to CEQA, to monitor performance of the mitigation measures included in any environmental document to ensure that mitigation does, in fact, take place. The District is the designated lead agency for the MMRP and is responsible for review of all monitoring reports, enforcement actions, and document disposition.

As identified in the TAMT Program FEIR MMRP, Mitigation Measure AQ-4 (MM AQ-4), states that as a condition of approval of any new or amended real estate agreement or Coastal Development Permit for dry bulk operations that would result in an increase in daily or annual throughput over baseline conditions, the San Diego Unified Port District shall require the project proponent to install and use the best available control technologies to achieve a minimum 95% control efficiency for particulate matter. Implementation of MM AQ-4 would not be applicable to the proposed project as the granting of the short-term lease would not result in an exceedance of the Baseline Dry Bulk throughput (289,864 metric tons) previously contemplated at TAMT. No new development, construction, uses, or increase in the size of the Tenant's leasehold or the short-term lease area is proposed or authorized as part of this short-term lease.

The existing short-term lease commenced on January 1, 2018 and would be extended to January 1, 2023, for a total term of five (5) years.

Due to its nature and limited scope, construction of the proposed project would generate a minor amount of vehicle trips and would require limited use of equipment. Therefore, impacts related to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions, and transportation and traffic are not anticipated to occur. Furthermore, the Tenant would be responsible for complying with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding construction demolition debris, hazards and hazardous materials, and stormwater.

The following categorical determinations are based on the project submittal and all project information known to the District as of the date of this determination.

CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT (CEQA)

CATEGORICAL DETERMINATION

Categorical Exemption: SG §15301, Class 1/Section 3.a: Existing Facilities

3.a. Existing Facilities (SG § 15301) (Class 1): Includes operation, repair, maintenance, or minor alteration of existing public or private structures, facilities, mechanical equipment, or topographical features, involving negligible or no expansion of use beyond that previously existing, including but not limited to:

- (4) New and renewed short-term tenancy agreements which do not result in change in the existing use. This exemption does not apply to any new development associated with the activities of the tenant. This exemption is also inapplicable if the cumulative impact of continuing the existing use or conditions in the same place, over time, is significant.

The proposed project is determined to be Categorically Exempt pursuant to the CEQA Guidelines and the Section of the District's *Guidelines for Compliance with CEQA* as identified above. This is appropriate for the proposed project because it consists of extension of an existing short-term lease for the purpose of importation, storing, and truck loading of dry bulk commodities and would involve no expansion of use beyond that previously existing. The District has determined none of the six exceptions to the use of a categorical exemption apply to this project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15300.2).

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15062, a 35-day statute of limitations for this CEQA exemption shall apply from the date a Notice of Exemption is posted with the San Diego County Clerk, or a 180-day statute of limitations for this CEQA exemption shall apply if no Notice of Exemption is filed.

CALIFORNIA COASTAL ACT

PORT MASTER PLAN CONSISTENCY

Planning District: 4 - Tenth Avenue Marine Terminal (Precise Plan Figure 13)

Land Use Designation: Marine Terminal

The proposed project conforms to the certified Port Master Plan because it would involve an extension of an existing short-term lease for the purpose of importation, storing, and truck loading of dry bulk commodities, consistent with the existing certified Land use designation. The proposed project would not change the use of the site nor would it interrupt or expand the existing conforming use of the site.

CATEGORICAL DETERMINATION

The proposed project would extend an existing real estate agreement through issuance of a lease. The proposed project does not allow for "development" as defined in Section 30106 of the California Coastal Act, or "new development" pursuant to Section 1.a. of the District's Coastal Development Permit Regulations. Therefore, issuance of a Coastal Development Permit or categorical exclusion is not required.


CALIFORNIA PUBLIC TRUST DOCTRINE


The proposed project complies with Section 87.(a)(2) of the Port Act, which allows for all visitor-serving commercial and industrial uses and purposes, and the construction, reconstruction, repair, and maintenance of commercial and industrial buildings, plants, and facilities. The Port Act was enacted by the California Legislature and is consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine. Consequently, the proposed project is consistent with the Public Trust Doctrine.

RANDA CONIGLIO
President/CEO

Determination by:
Michael Paul
Assistant Planner
Development Services

Deputy General Counsel

Signature: 
Date: 1-14-20

Signature: 
Date: 1/14/20