

Two federal candidate species, the gopher tortoise and the gopher frog will be impacted by the project due to construction of facilities and mining activities. Mitigation measures to reduce this impact include pre-construction surveys to scope burrows and the relocation of the species. Additionally, gopher tortoise will be relocated to the project site upon completion of the mining activities. Based on the implementation of these conservation measures, the proposed project is not expected to have a significant effect on threatened and endangered species. The associated IPaC threatened and endangered species lists specifically acquired for the review area is included as Appendix D.

9.0 CULTURAL RESOURCES

A desktop and subsequent Phase I Cultural Resources Survey was conducted for the Keystone review area by Terra Xplorations (report dated October 26, 2018). Phase I investigations of this property led to the discovery of six archaeological sites and four isolated finds. Based on the results of the field investigation, none of these resources were considered significant, having been heavily impacted by numerous years of repeated pine cultivation activities. All six archaeological sites were recommended ineligible for NRHP inclusion under Criterion D based on their lack of integrity. As no significant cultural resources will be impacted by the proposed mining operation, TerraX recommended clearance for the project.

An additional Phase I Cultural Resources Survey for the Adirondack tract was conducted by Terra Xplorations (report dated May 31, 2019) on the tract. The Phase I investigation of this property led to the identification of one archaeological site and two isolated finds. The single archaeological site and both isolated finds date to the early-to-middle twentieth century. Neither the single archaeological site nor the isolated finds are recommended as eligible for NRHP inclusion under Criterion D. An architectural survey identified six resources within view of the proposed project area. Of these six, only one, is recommended as potentially eligible for NRHP inclusion under Criterion C. This resource is a mid-century ranch home constructed in 1950. Though currently abandoned, the integrity of the structure is intact and its architecture is significant as a representative example of a mid-twentieth century ranch house. TerraX recommends avoidance of this property, and notes that it may suffer adverse visual and audible effects as a result of the proposed mining operations. However, the house is currently located near an existing chip mill and railroad tracks and is currently exposed to heavy audible effects. The house will not be impacted by the project directly.

An additional Phase I Cultural Resources Survey for the TIAA tract was conducted by Terra Xplorations (report dated June 16, 2019) on the tract. As a summary of findings of this survey, three archaeological sites and one isolated find were discovered. TerraX recommended that the sites be considered ineligible for NRHP inclusion under Criterion D and isolated finds, by their nature, are not eligible for NRHP inclusion. Based on the findings of the survey, no further cultural resources studies were recommended for the proposed project area.

The proposed project is not expected to significantly impact cultural resources. Copies of the Phase I Cultural Resources Survey reports are provided in Appendix E.