

## 3.9 AESTHETICS

This section of the DEIS describes existing aesthetics conditions on the site and in the site vicinity. Potential impacts associated with the EIS Alternatives are evaluated and mitigation measures are identified. This section is based on the *Visual Impact Analysis* (December 2022) prepared by ESA with peer review by EA Engineering (see **Appendix L**).

### 3.9.1 Methodology and Viewpoints

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#### Methodology

The visual impact methodology employed for this EIS is intended to document the nature of the existing landscape, and to identify impacts to visual resources that would result from alteration of the landscape from proposed mining and reclamation. The assessment relies on the preparation of computer-based visual simulations of the landscape that would result from mining of the Expansion Area. Simulations are a generally accepted means to evaluate the nature of proposed visual change.

A number of key viewpoints were identified from a variety of locations around the site. The selected viewpoints are intended to be representative of viewpoints where public views toward the site are available, and to illustrate the potential for significant visual impacts to the public from the Proposed Action (see discussion of *Key Viewpoint Selection below*). At each of these locations, existing conditions were photographed, and these photographs are used as a basis of comparison against simulated conditions at the same viewpoints.

The visual impact assessment is based on a combination of identifying potential for public views, evaluating existing visual quality, identifying viewer sensitivities, and evaluating degree of visual change resulting from a proposed project. For this analysis, levels of visual quality and viewer sensitivity are estimated based on criteria that establish ratings of “high,” “medium,” and “low.” Visual change is qualitatively evaluated based on the visual simulations. By qualitatively combining rankings of visual quality, visual sensitivity, and the direct visual change identified in the simulations, an overall determination can then be made regarding the potential impact on a given viewpoint. For example, mining-related actions at a particular viewpoint may show a high level of impact in the simulations, but when combined with a low visual quality and sensitivity ranking, would be considered to have little overall impact to visual quality in that area.

Visual quality for this analysis is evaluated using the following criteria:

- **Low:** Landscape is common to the region and exhibits few, if any, memorable features, or patterns that provide visual diversity. A prevalence of encroaching human elements or landscape modifications exists, which do not compatibly blend

with the natural surroundings. Human alterations exhibit low maintenance, design quality, or siting sensitivity.

- **Medium or Moderate:** Landscape exhibits generally attractive natural and man-made features/patterns, although they are not visually distinctive or unusual within the region. The landscape integrity of the area provides some positive visual experiences such as natural open space with some existing disturbance or well-maintained development.
- **High:** Landscape exhibits distinctive and memorable visual features and patterns that are largely intact and undisturbed – usually a rural or open space setting. Development or visual disturbances, if present, are well planned to integrate with natural landscape materials or character.

Viewer sensitivity is considered dependent on viewer types and exposure to a proposed activity, number of viewers, availability of views to the proposed activity, view orientation and duration, and viewer expectation. Levels of viewer sensitivity are evaluated by the following criteria:

- **Low:** Viewer types represent viewers of low visual sensitivity including workers who are involved in their work and not focused on the landscape. Viewer numbers and view duration are low. Viewers have low expectations of experiencing high quality views and are not typically in search of a quality visual experience. Views are often screened or limited.
- **Medium or Moderate:** Viewer types represent viewers of medium visual sensitivity including recreationists and passing motorists. Viewer numbers and view duration are moderate in scope. Viewers have only a moderate expectation of experiencing high quality views and may or may not be engaged with the passing visual experience.
- **High:** Viewer types represent viewers of high visual sensitivity including tourists and homeowners. Viewer numbers and view duration are high, with views oriented towards a specific landscape or vista. Viewers have every expectation of experiencing high quality views and are often in search of a quality visual experience. Views are often wide and sweeping, or from a superior vantage point.

(See **Appendix L** to this Draft EIS for detail on visual analysis methodology.)

## Viewpoint Selection

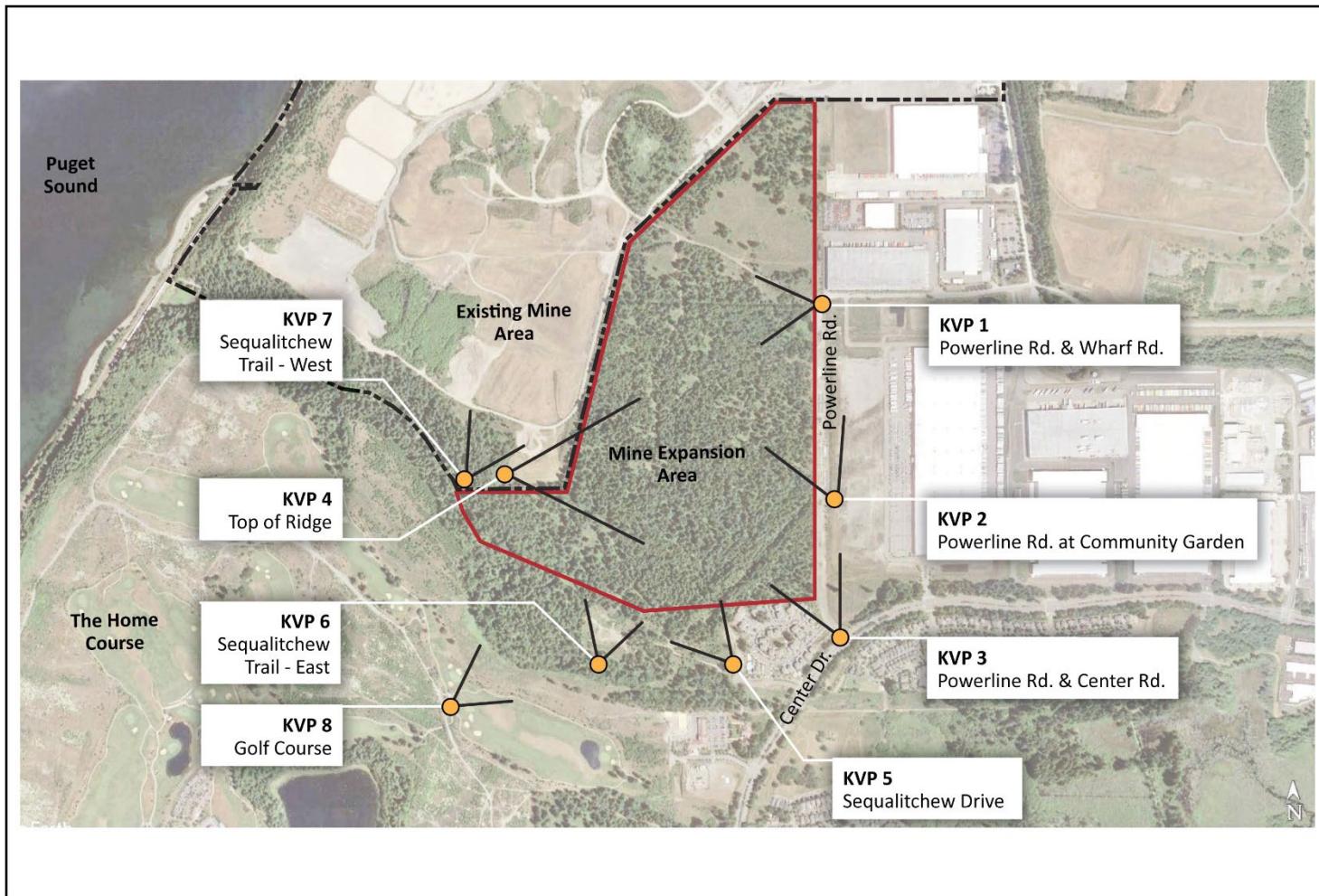
Due to existing topography and vegetation, there are very few locations outside the site from which existing operations are now visible or would be visible in the future. Natural topographic relief in the area is minimal, outside the Sequalitchew Creek Canyon, which is a relatively deep ravine. Although views into the site from the vicinity is minimal, proposed mining operations would remove some of the existing vegetation, which would affect some off-site views.

A viewshed analysis using Google Earth (2022) demonstrated that there are no surrounding areas of higher ground that afford views of the site. Aerial photos show that current mining operations have maintained vegetated buffers along the west and south sides of the mine. As a result, there are no views into the site from Puget Sound or the Sequalitchew Creek canyon. Views into the site from the north are only available from the existing mine. There are no public viewpoints of the site to the west, due to presence of the vegetated bluff at the west perimeter of the mine along Puget Sound. No public viewpoints are available from the northwest; the only views are from the mining access road and the abandoned Fort Lewis landfill. Therefore, the viewpoints chosen for simulations are limited to locations to the south and east of the site.

Key Viewpoints (KVPs) were selected to illustrate the greatest or “worst case” potential for visual impact to the public from the Proposed Action. Visual simulations were developed from the four KVPs around the proposed mine site where a view to the proposed mining activity is available (KVPs 1, 2, 3 and 4), as identified in **Figure 3.9-1**. A summary description and selection criteria for these four KVPs is provided in **Table 3.9-1**. These viewpoints were chosen to provide representative depictions of the future landscape that would best illustrate proposed project changes from a variety of viewpoints. To the degree possible, “sensitive” viewpoints were selected from locations accessible to the public; these were believed to potentially impact the greatest number of people.

The four other viewpoints (KVPs 5, 6, 7 and 8) were considered but simulations were not considered necessary because the site is blocked from view by vegetation and/or topography and would remain so during and after proposed mining at the site (both Re-mine Area and Expansion Area portion of the site). This included a view at the west end of Sequalitchew Drive (KVP 5); a public road that is expected to be eventually extended but currently serves as an access point to a public trailhead; a typical view looking northwest towards the site along Sequalitchew Trail (KVP 6); and a view from a semi-public viewpoint – The Home Course golf course south of Sequalitchew Creek (KVP 7). For these viewpoints, photos are included showing the approximate location of the site beyond the vegetation and topography that obstructs views of the site (see **Appendix L** for additional detail on selected viewpoints).

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Figure 3.9-1

Key View Point Location Map

**Table 3.9-1**  
**SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF SIMULATION KEY VIEWPOINTS (KVPS)**

Key Viewpoint Description	Location and Viewers	Selection Rationale
<b>1: Powerline Rd. at Wharf Rd.</b> This viewpoint lies along Powerline Road at the point where there is a 90-degree bend in the road. The camera angle is looking in a westerly direction, down into the basin of the new creek bed.	Private Road: Vehicle passengers	Wharf Road is used primarily by trucks turning around for the adjacent warehouses, but Wharf Road is open to the public. Pedestrians and cyclists using Powerline Road can access this intersection. Views of vegetation along this road would be heavily affected.
<b>2. Powerline Rd. at Community Garden.</b> This viewpoint lies on the east side of Powerline Road near the south entrance to the community Garden. The camera angle is looking in a northwesterly direction.	Private Road: Garden users, cyclists, pedestrians.	Community garden users can drive to the community garden on Powerline Road. Pedestrians and cyclists also use Powerline Road.
<b>3: Powerline Rd./Center Dr.</b> This viewpoint lies on the northwest side of the intersection of Powerline Road and Center Drive. The camera angle is looking in a northwesterly direction.	Public: Vehicle passengers, DuPont residents	This represents a key public viewpoint. The public traveling along Center Drive can look into the site along the proposed access road and have a glimpse of the site alteration that is taking place. The view would be affected by removal of existing vegetation as part of mining operations...
<b>4: Top of Ridge</b> This viewpoint sits on top of the ridge between the active mining site and Sequalitchew Creek, at the southwest edge of the Expansion Area. The camera angle is looking in east northeast direction, giving an overview of the mine site after mining and restoration are complete.	Private: CalPortland employees	This viewpoint models a view that is located on the privately-owned site and is not available to the public. There currently is no public road or trail providing access to this spot. An observer must climb from the existing mine road up a small brush-covered knoll to reach it. Although not public, the viewpoint offers an extensive view of the project from above, which is intended to help the reader understand the character of the project landscape after reclamation.
<b>Key Viewpoints considered but not simulated</b>		
<b>5: Sequalitchew Drive.</b> This viewpoint lies at the current west end of this road, where public trail users frequently park. The camera angle is looking in a northwesterly direction.	Public: Trail users	This viewpoint shows where the project site stands in relation to this popular public trailhead along Sequalitchew Creek. Vegetation and topography block views of the project site.
<b>6: Sequalitchew Trail - East</b> This viewpoint lies on the public trail leading down to the Sound. The camera angle is looking in a northerly direction.	Public: Trail users	This viewpoint shows where the project site stands in relation to this popular public trail along Sequalitchew Creek. Vegetation and topography along Sequalitchew Creek block views of the project site.
<b>7: Sequalitchew Trail - West</b> This viewpoint lies on the public trail leading down to the Sound. The camera angle is looking in a northwesterly direction.	Public: Trail users	This viewpoint shows the lower portion of Sequalitchew Creek Trail at approximately the closest point on the trail to the project site. Because the site is directly uphill from this location, the view is not facing the site but shows the slope along the trail's north side. Vegetation and topography along Sequalitchew Creek block views of the project site and would not be affected.
<b>8: The Home Course (Golf Course).</b> This viewpoint lies near the edge of the golf course, near the edge of the Sequalitchew Creek ravine. The camera angle is looking in a northerly direction, toward Sequalitchew Creek and the project site.	Semi-Private: Golfers/Recreationists	This viewpoint shows where the project site stands in relation to the golf course. Vegetation within the golf course and along Sequalitchew Creek block views of the project site.

**Source:** ESA 2023.

## 3.9.2 Affected Environment

The visual character of the site is varied. The Expansion Area portion of the site includes a mixture of open grassland and mature, open prairie forest dominated primarily by Douglas fir. This forest cover varies in density throughout the Expansion Area, typical for a south Puget Sound prairie landscape, but is comparatively dense on the eastern edge, along Powerline Road and Center Drive. The Re-mine Area portion of the site is primarily disturbed by previous mining activity, with some undisturbed natural area. Forested evergreen buffers provides a measure of visual opaqueness to the site, such that passersby currently cannot view the existing mining operations.



As noted previously, due to existing topography and vegetation, there are few locations where the public can view the site, and there are no views to the site from Puget Sound or Sequalitchew Creek ravine.

### Existing Conditions at Viewpoints

#### KVP 1 – Powerline Road at Wharf Road

KVP 1 is located at the centerline of Powerline Road, immediately south of the right-angle bend, looking directly westward into the future mining Expansion Area. The gravel road on the right-hand side of the photo is an active service road for the existing mining operations. These operations are currently screened by existing mature vegetation that is typical of south Puget Sound prairie forests. The dense forest seen on the left side of the photo is typical of the dense buffer of Douglas fir that is found along the west side of Powerline Road from KVP 1 south to Center Drive.



The visual quality is judged to be moderate. No extended views are present. Existing vegetation is a mixture of disturbed and undisturbed vegetation. Some visual clutter is present, such as fences and gates.

Viewers are expected to be of a low sensitivity, including the occasional local motorist, bicyclist, or pedestrian. The landscape is common to the region and a prevalence of encroaching human elements or landscape modifications exist, which do not compatibly blend with the natural surroundings

## **KVP 2 – Powerline Road at Community Garden**

KVP 2 is located on Powerline Road at the existing Dupont Community Garden between Wharf Road and Center Drive, looking northwest towards the site. Paved roadway, gravel shoulder, Community Garden entrance, and forest area are visible in the foreground. Existing overhead wires and transmission line poles are visible in the background. The visual quality is judged to be moderate. No extended views are present. Existing vegetation is a mixture of disturbed and undisturbed vegetation. Some visual clutter is present, such as fences, gates, and signage. The east side of Powerline Road is dominated by large transmission line poles and overhead wires.

Viewers are expected to be of a low to moderate sensitivity and be more numerous than for KVP 1. Viewers include the community garden users, and the occasional local motorist, bicyclist, or pedestrian, and City staff accessing a plant nursery. The landscape is common to the region and a prevalence of encroaching human elements or landscape modifications exist, which do not compatibly blend with the natural surroundings.

## **KVP 3 – Powerline Road and Center Drive**

KVP 3 is located on the berm on the east side of Center Drive (facing directly toward the Expansion Area portion of the site), directly in line with the centerline of Powerline Road as it intersects Center Drive. The existing power transmission towers following Powerline Road are clearly visible in the middle-ground of the photo. The dense forest of mature Douglas fir in the background is typical of the forest buffer along the eastern border of the Expansion Area portion of the site. It is a continuation of the forest seen in the left-hand side of the photo seen in KVP 2 Existing. This forest continues with similar density to the west. The density of the forest in the far-left hand side of the photo continues west along the existing Sequalitchew Creek to Puget Sound.



The visual quality is judged to be moderate. The view is a mixture of mature second-growth forest in the background contrasting with a developed arterial collector road in the foreground, the Creekside Village Apartments on the left side of the view, and a high-tension power transmission line in the middle-ground.

Viewers are expected to be of medium sensitivity, including workers or residents of DuPont, as well as visiting recreationists driving along Center Drive.

## **KVP 4 – Top of Ridge**

KVP 4 is located on a high point on the ridge between the Sequalitchew Creek canyon and the existing mine area. The viewpoint is on the Existing Mine site, in an isolated, inaccessible location, requiring a hike through unmarked forest, and members of the public would not typically see this view<sup>1</sup>. The grassy field in the foreground consists of reclaimed area from the existing mining operations that was re-contoured and hydroseeded.



Visual quality is classified as medium, with sweeping open views of the landscape and mature forests in the background. The middle ground view is dominated by the newly reclaimed mine area, showing evidence of recent vegetation growth.

Viewer sensitivity was not classified, as this view is on private property where public access is prohibited by safety regulations enforced by the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).and would remain inaccessible until mine reclamation is complete.

## **KVP 5 – Sequalitchew Drive**

KVP 5 is located on the west end of Sequalitchew Drive, looking in a northwesterly direction towards the Expansion Area portion of the site. Sequalitchew public trail users frequently park near this location. The photo shows the gravel trail entrance with residential structures in the background. The existing vegetation is comprised of evergreen native conifers and invasive scotch broom, which has overtaken the understory and open areas along the trail. The foreground includes a wooden fence, sign and concrete slab with wooden bollards indicating the entrance to Sequalitchew public trail.



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<sup>1</sup> The viewpoint was selected as one of the simulation viewpoints because it gives an unobstructed view of the Expansion Area mining area.

### **KVP 6 – Sequalitchew Trail - East**

KVP 6 is located on the center of the existing historic railroad bed to the southwest of the Expansion Area portion of the site. The photo shows the density of existing vegetation in the creek canyon, which obscures any clear view of the steep canyon walls. Viewers would be expected to be of high sensitivity, principally hikers, and other recreationists using the proposed trail system based on the existing old narrow gauge railway path. Visual quality is judged to be high, with a view of a mature second-growth forest surrounding the viewer.



### **KVP 7 – Sequalitchew Trail - West**

KVP 7 is located on the lower portion of Sequalitchew Creek Trail at approximately the closest point on the trail to the project site. The site is directly uphill from this location, so the view is not facing the site but shows the slope along the trail's north side on the right-hand side of the photo. Existing vegetation and topography along Sequalitchew Creek currently block views of the site. Viewers are expected to be of high sensitivity, principally hikers and other recreationists. Visual quality is judged to be high, with an unbroken view of the forest and Sequalitchew Creek Trail



### **KVP 8 – The Home Course**

KVP 8 is located on the top of a high knoll at the north side of the Home Course, a privately owned golf course immediately south of Sequalitchew Creek. This knoll is the highest point of land along the north side of the golf course. The tree line marks the top of the slope leading into the canyon. Viewers are expected to be of high sensitivity, principally users of the golf course. Visual quality is judged to be high, with an unbroken view of an attractive mature second growth forest viewed across an open grassy meadow.



### **3.9.3 Impacts of the Alternatives**

This section identifies and analyzes impacts to existing aesthetic character and views associated with the EIS Alternatives.

## Introduction

Visual simulation of conditions under the proposed Pioneer Aggregates South Parcel Project requires depiction of vegetation removal and changes in topography, as well as revegetation of the landscape at a future point in time (see **Appendix L** for detail on visual simulation methodology). For the purposes of this analysis, simulations were prepared at three future points in time, referred to as Year X, Year X+ and Year Y. Where the proposed mining is not visible behind trees or another obstruction, the mine/portion of mine is shown with hatching, brackets, or another method (see KVP 5, KVP 6, KVP 7 and KVP 8).

For KVP 1, 2 and 3, Year X simulates the view when the visual impact of the project would be the greatest. This is expected to occur in approximately two years from the beginning of mining). At KVP 2, an additional simulation, Year X+ simulates the view approximately five years after the trees along Powerline Road have been planted, establishing a dense conifer screening that is expected to reach heights between eight and twelve feet by Year X+. For all KVPs, Year Y is chosen to depict conditions ten years after the end of mining, when revegetation of the site is well established. Mining of the South Parcel is assumed to take approximately 14 years. Therefore, Year Y would be approximately 24 years after project inception. By that time, it is assumed that the temporary power lines along the east perimeter of the Expansion Area portion of the site would be removed and woody vegetation such as trees and shrubs would be established on the slopes.

Year X and Year Y simulations were prepared for KVP 1, 2, and 3. KVP 4 is from a location where the public would not be permitted to be present, so a simulation was only prepared for the Year Y condition.

## ALTERNATIVE 1 – PROPOSED ACTION

As indicated in **Chapter 2** of this Draft EIS, the Proposed Action includes horizontal expansion of mining on approximately 188 acres of undisturbed forested area (Expansion Area) and vertical expansion on approximately 125 acres of mostly disturbed area where re-mining would deepen a portion of the existing mine (Re-Mine Area). Prior to initiation of mining operations, logging and clearing of existing vegetation on the majority of the Expansion Area portion of the site and on a portion of the Re-mine Area portion of the site, which would change the existing aesthetic character of the site. As proposed mining progresses, completed mine phases would be reclaimed, including regrading and revegetation.

Changes in the aesthetic character of the site under the Proposed Action are anticipated to occur incrementally over an approximately 14-year period.

As indicated earlier, a number of key viewpoints (KVPs) were selected to illustrate the potential for visual impact to the public. Visual simulations were developed for the four

KVPs where a view to proposed mining would be visible. For KVPs where no view to proposed mining would be available, the intervening vegetation and/or topography is illustrated.

## **KVP 1 – Powerline Road at Wharf Road**

**Figure 3.9-2** illustrates the existing view and proposed Year X and Y conditions from KVP 1. The deep excavation resulting from new mining operations of the Proposed Action would eliminate the mature trees that screen the existing mining operations from/and along Powerline Road. The beginnings of reforestation efforts are visible in the Year X simulation, which would eventually allow new trees to grow up and screen the views again. However, it would take five to seven years to develop a full screen and longer for a more mature forest to develop. While visual change is evident, the Proposed Action would not have a significant adverse visual impact at KVP 1. This is due to the lack of sensitive viewers and the relative rapidity with which the landscape is expected to recover. Most of the unobstructed view from the road is expected to be screened within a five-year period due to vegetation regrowth.

## **KVP 2 – Powerline Road at Community Garden**

**Figure 3.9-3** illustrates the existing view and proposed Year X, X+ and Y conditions from KVP 2. Evergreen trees will be planted along the property line adjacent to Powerline Road; estimated to be planted in fall/winter of 2022/2023, depending on weather conditions and the availability of trees. Prior to the beginning of proposed mining the existing chain link fence would be moved to the property line.

Shrubby vegetation and large evergreen trees currently block views of the site. That vegetation would be removed at the beginning of mining at the Expansion Area portion of the site. An access road would parallel the east property line and would have temporary overhead power lines to power dewatering wells. Removal of the second growth conifers and groundcover would contrast sharply with current conditions and would temporarily open up views of the Expansion Area, an industrial use that is currently not visible from this location. Overhead lines would add an element of visual clutter. Given the sensitivity of viewers, this is considered a moderate impact on visual quality; the impact would be mitigated by the evergreen screening that would limit the duration of this impact. In Year X, the site would be partially screened by densely planted evergreens along the fence line. By Year X+, the trees are expected to grow to approximately 8 to 12 feet in height. By Year Y, mining would be complete along this section. The power poles used for dewatering shown in Year X and Year X+ would be removed. Additionally, the fence along the perimeter would be removed in Year Y. The trees may be thinned as required for overall health.

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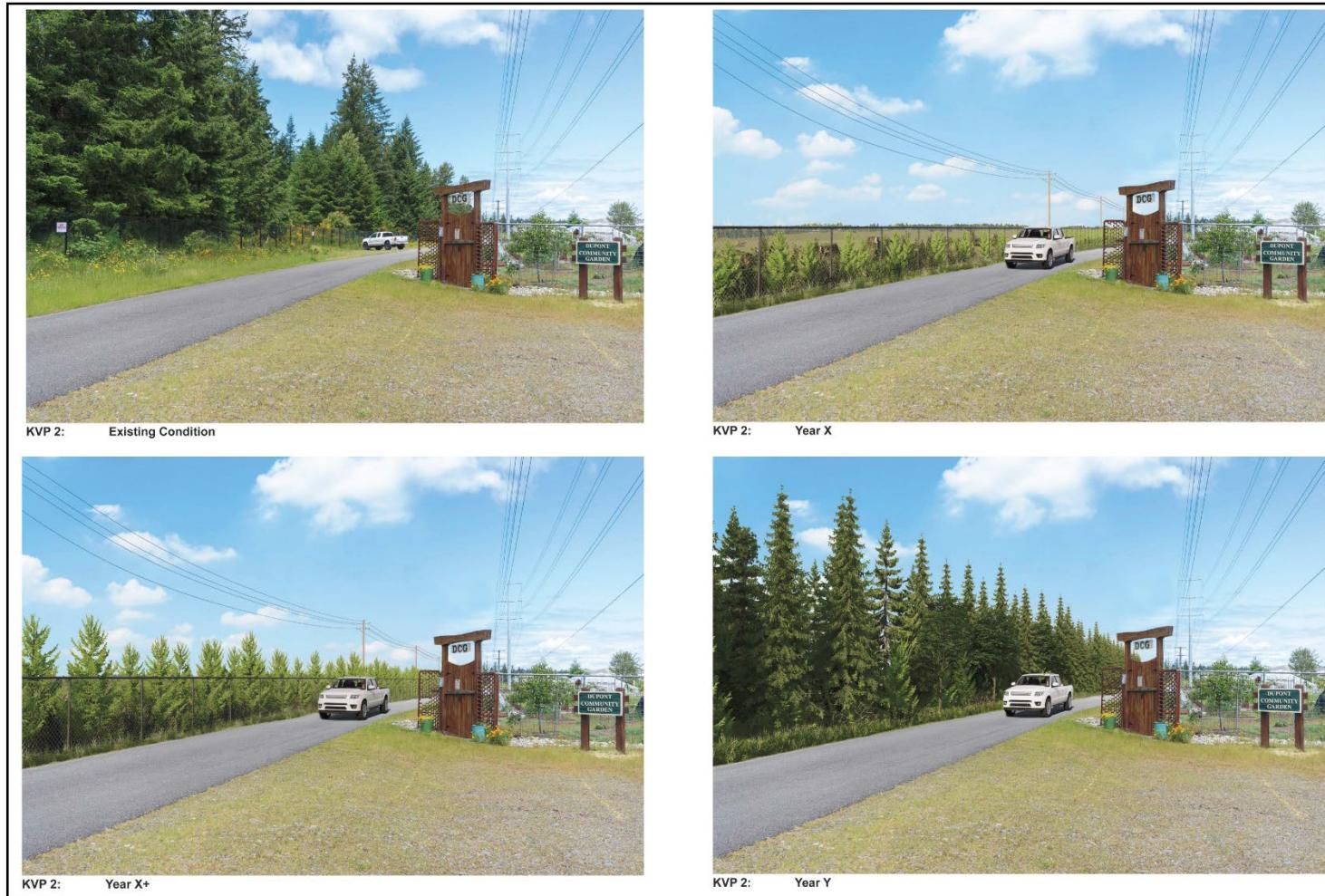


Source: *ESA, 2022.*  
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**Figure 3.9-2**

Key View Point Location 1

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Source: ESA, 2022.



Figure 3.9-3

Key View Point Location 2

## **KVP 3 – Powerline Road and Center Road**

**Figure 3.9-4** illustrates the existing view and proposed X and Y years from KVP 3.

As shown in the simulation of KVP 3 at Year X, the cut through the forest would be clearly visible on the right-hand side closest to the power pole. The simulation demonstrates that the mining operation would not be visible from KVP 3. This is due to the grading, which would cause the land to fall away quickly from the viewer. Additionally, a 20-foot-high berm planted with trees and other native landscape vegetation would be placed in this area to shield residents in Creekside Village Apartments from potential visual and auditory impacts resulting from mining activities in the Expansion Area. The proposed Project is not anticipated to have a significant adverse visual impact at this KVP due to a low degree of visual change combined with the moderate existing visual quality and viewer sensitivity. The trees, which are cleared at Year X, would show regrowth by Year Y, although it would take many more years beyond Year Y before the trees would reach the same height as existing trees.

## **KVP 4 – Top of Ridge**

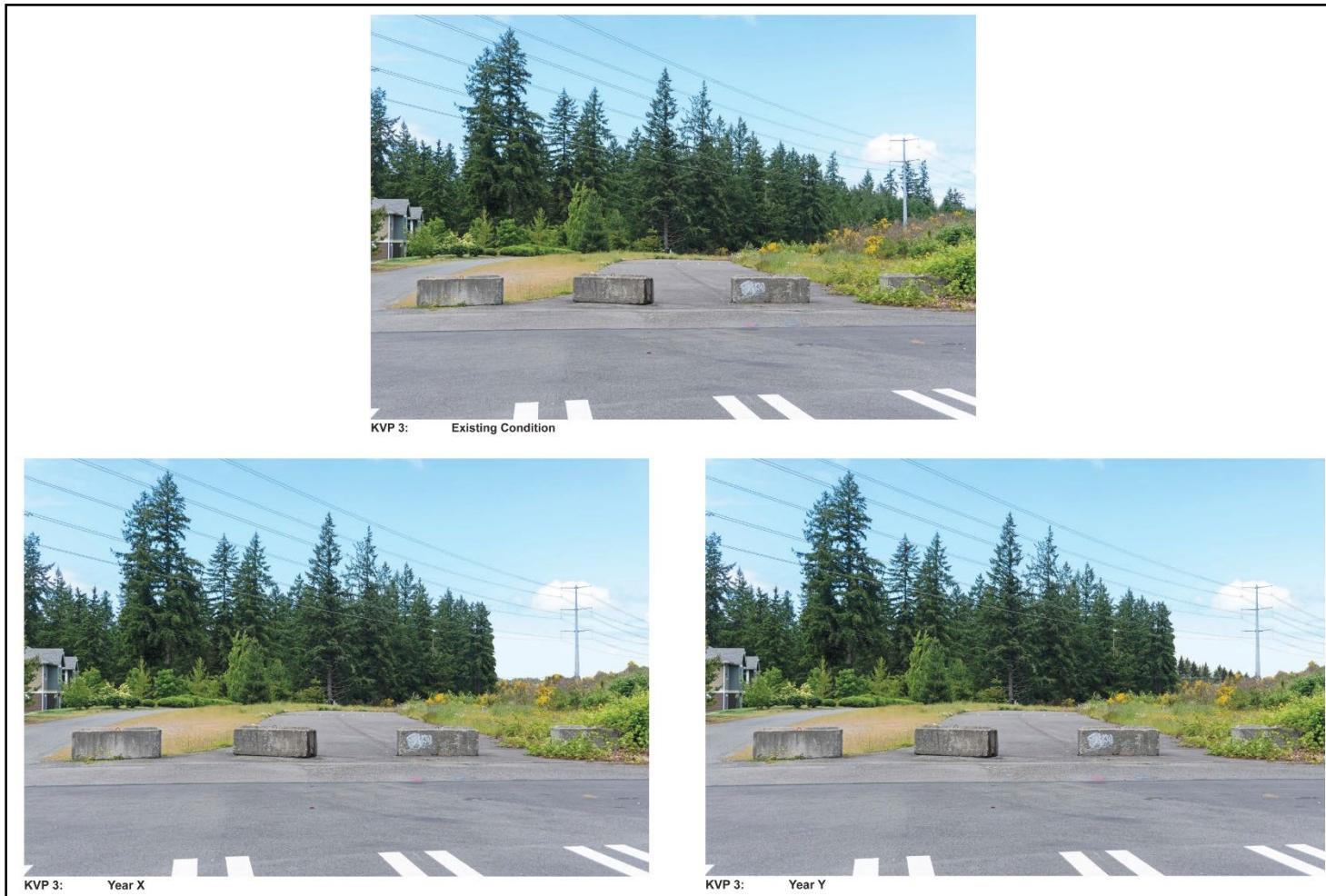
**Figure 3.9-5** illustrates the existing view and proposed Year Y from KVP 4.

The scene in the Year Y simulation depicts the interior of the proposed mine following the completion of mining activity and restoration. In the foreground, the ground plane is relatively level with only minor variations in terrain. In the background, plateau benches step up towards the south end of the site to anticipate and facilitate future development. All side slopes are shown with dense tree plantings whereas the floor of the mine is relatively open having only been hydroseeded with native ground cover. Along the distant horizon, the screening vegetation effectively obstructs Powerline Road beyond. Although the visual environment has been altered in this viewpoint, the impact is not judged to be significant. This is due to the inaccessibility of the viewpoint and total absence of sensitive viewers on the west and south sides of both the existing and proposed mining sites.

## **KVP 5 – Sequalitchev Drive**

**Figure 3.9-6** illustrates the existing view and future view from KVP 5. As shown, the proposed mining area would be screened by existing vegetation. Vegetation and topography block views of the project site, which is generally indicated by the shaded band. All trees visible from this viewpoint are off-site and would not be affected. This view has not been simulated as the visible trees are privately owned. Viewers would be expected to be of high sensitivity, principally hikers and other recreationists using the trail system. Visual quality is judged to be high because this is an established hiking trail.

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**Figure 3.9-4**

Key View Point Location 3

Source: *ESA, 2022.*



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Source: ESA, 2022.



Figure 3.9-5

Key View Point Location 4

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Figure 3.9-6

Key View Point Location 5

Source: ESA, 2022.



## **KVP 6 – Sequalitchew Trail - East**

**Figure 3.9-7** illustrates the existing view and future view from KVP 6. All trees are located offsite and would not be affected by proposed mining, therefore no change to visual quality would occur as a result of proposed mining. Sequalitchew Creek is below the trail to the left and the viewer is surrounded by undisturbed vegetation.

## **KVP 7 – Sequalitchew Trail - West**

**Figure 3.9-8** illustrates the existing view and future view from KVP 7. As shown, the proposed mining area would be screened by existing topography and vegetation. The site is directly uphill from this location and is not visible; the view provided shows the slope along the trail's north side (right-hand side of **Figure 3.9-8**). Vegetation and topography along Sequalitchew Creek block views of the project site and would not be affected. All disturbance associated with proposed mining would be outside of Sequalitchew Creek ravine and set back a minimum of 100 feet from the top of the slope associated with Sequalitchew Creek. All trees are offsite and would not be affected under the Proposed Action. Visual quality would not change as a result of the proposed mining.

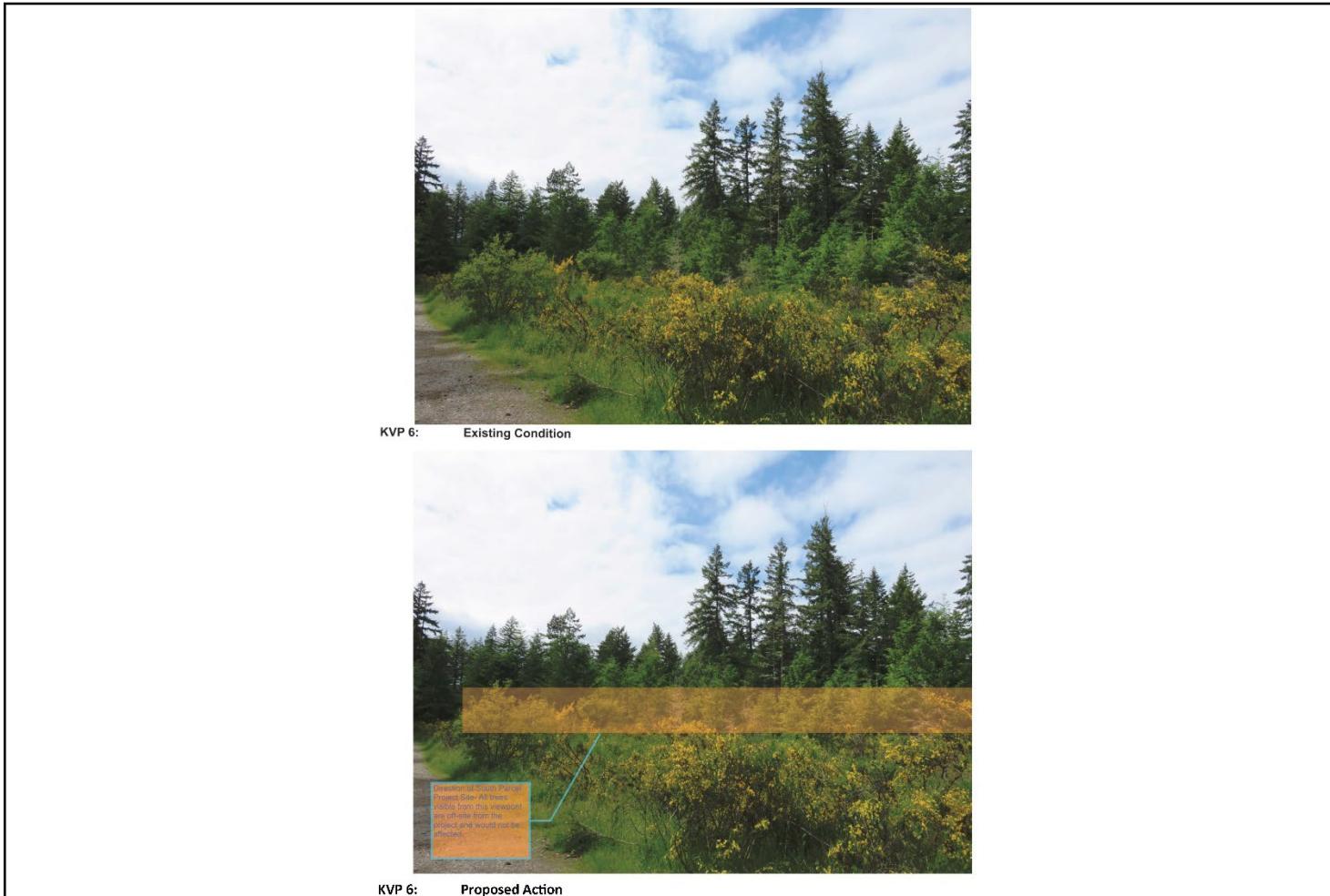
## **KVP 8 – The Home Course**

**Figure 3.9-9** illustrates the existing view and future view from KVP 8. As shown, the proposed mining area would be screened by existing topography and vegetation. All trees visible from this viewpoint are off-site and would not be affected. Similarly, viewer sensitivity and visual quality would not be affected.

## **CUMULATIVE IMPACTS**

Cumulative impacts to views could, hypothetically, occur due to clearing that has taken place on the Existing Mine together with proposed mining under the Proposed Action. From viewpoints around the site, including KVPs 1, 2, and 3, however, there are no views of the Existing Mine. When clearing of the site occurs as part of the Proposed Action, views of the Existing Mine would be temporarily opened up. The screening that is proposed for the Proposed Action along the east perimeter would screen these views after the plantings reach a height of six feet or greater which is expected to occur by *Year X+ or sooner*. Views from KVP 5, 6, 7, and 8 would not be affected by clearing of the Expansion Area portion of the site given that screening trees from these viewpoints are located offsite. As such, cumulative impacts would be limited to the first few years prior to Year X. No other cumulative view impacts are anticipated.

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Source: ESA, 2022.



Figure 3.9-7

Key View Point Location 6

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Source: ESA, 2022.



**Figure 3.9-8**

Key View Point Location 7

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Source: ESA, 2022.

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Figure 3.9-9

Key View Point Location 8

## **ALTERNATIVE 2 – NO ACTION**

There are two No Action Alternatives- Scenario A Continuation of Existing Conditions and Scenario B Site Development Under Existing Zoning.

### **Scenario A**

Under Scenario A, mining activities associated with the Re-Mine Area of the site and the Existing Mine would continue as currently permitted. The mining operation would retain a vegetated buffer at its perimeter with no lighting, and the interior of the mine would likely not be seen from existing public places. The Existing Mine has an estimated remaining life of 6 to 10 years with mining currently limited to 10 feet above groundwater. The Expansion Area portion of the site is assumed to remain undeveloped and would continue in its vegetated condition.

### **Scenario B**

Under Scenario B, the proposal would not occur. The site would be developed in urban uses consistent with the City's Future Land Use Map. The majority of the area affected is currently designated by the City of DuPont Comprehensive Plan as Manufacturing and Research, with a smaller area designated for residential uses. The corner of the property near Center Drive is designated as Residential 12, which would allow higher density residential development where multifamily density averages 12 units per acre. Urban development, as permitted under current planning and zoning designations, is assumed to occur east of the lease line demarcating existing mining operations. The timing and nature of any such development would be driven by market forces.

In general, future structures would rise above the ground level and would likely be more visible within the surrounding landscape than under the Proposed Action. Light and glare from buildings, the street, and security lighting would extend these effects into the nighttime hours. Future development would draw a greater number of daily users and viewers into the site than currently have access to it, both physically and visually. The degree of visual change outside of the site could be similar to or greater than under the Proposed Action, depending on buffer vegetation and the visual intensity and bulk of structures.

### **3.9.3 Mitigation Measures**

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The following mitigation measure have been included in the Proposed Action to reduce aesthetics impacts.

## **Proposed Mitigation Measures**

- A vegetated buffer would be maintained along Powerline Road. Trees would be planted densely to establish screening during mining operations. After mining is completed, selective thinning may be necessary to facilitate a healthy future forest within the buffer.
- As mining progresses, completed mine segments would be reclaimed to a vegetated condition. The reclamation plan would be reviewed by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (“DNR”) for consistency with the Surface Mining Act (RCW 78.44). In general, reclamation would consist of regrading, replacement of topsoil, and revegetation.

### **3.9.4      Significant Unavoidable Adverse Impacts**

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The Proposed Action would result in an unavoidable change to the visual character of the Expansion Area portion of the site. The extraction of mined material would result in a permeant change in the visual character of the site. However, the Proposed Action is not expected to result in a significant adverse impact to the visual environment of the surrounding community. The mining operation is expected to be only minimally visible to the general public from outside of the property boundary. In addition, mining is a transitional use of the site; although mining would alter the site for a number of years, after mining is complete, the site would be reclaimed and ultimately it would be available for development to another permitted use.