



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Death Valley National  
Park

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## Death Valley News Release

Release Date: **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
Contact: Terry Baldino, Public Information Officer  
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### **Notice of Decision Death Valley National Park to Re-activate Towne Pass Materials Site for Needed Highway Maintenance**

Following a 13-year hiatus, the National Park Service (NPS) will permit the resumption of use of Towne Pass Materials Site #218 (MS #218) located along State Route (SR) 190 adjacent to Towne Pass in Inyo County, California. The State of California, Department of Transportation (Caltrans) previously used this site to extract sand and gravel for SR 190 road maintenance purposes prior to 1994, and the passage of the California Desert Protection Act.

The purpose and need for this action is to provide necessary SR 190 maintenance that is cost effective and ensures road repair material used within the park is of a native variety with locally derived endemic organic and inorganic constituents. In partnership with Death Valley National Park, Caltrans is primarily responsible for the maintenance of State Route 190. Importing borrow materials from outside of Death Valley National Park is associated with high costs and runs the risk of introducing non-native plant species into the Park environment. The purpose of the proposal is to reduce the costs of maintaining and to expedite the repairing of State Route 190, a major thoroughfare through the Park. It is also needed in order to regulate a valid existing materials-extraction right under the California Desert Protection Act and to effectively manage road maintenance material for Highway SR 190. It will provide a native variety of material with locally derived endemic organic and inorganic constituents.

The National Park Service (NPS) has published an Environmental Assessment (EA) to assess the potential consequences of resumption of use of Towne Pass Materials Site #218 (MS #218). The purpose of this Notice of Decision and Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is to communicate the NPS selected alternative to reopen the existing site. Caltrans will resume use of the Towne Pass Materials Site #218 for borrow and spoil use for a period not to exceed 20 years, after which the site will be reclaimed. The FONSI and EA (with subsequent Errata) are available via Death Valley National Park's website (enter this address in web-browser:

<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/documentsList.cfm?parkId=297&projectId=16165>)

or through Superintendent James T. Reynolds, Death Valley National Park, PO Box 579, Death Valley, CA 92328, or Fax: (760) 786-3283, or Email

[DEVA\\_superintendent@nps.gov](mailto:DEVA_superintendent@nps.gov).

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