



NOTICE OF PREPARATION – DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT: EXHIBIT B

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING
976 OSOS STREET • ROOM 200 • SAN LUIS OBISPO • CALIFORNIA 93408 • (805) 781-5600
Promoting the Wise Use of Land • Helping to Build Great Communities

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW SUMMARY FOR SANTA MARGARITA QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW SUMMARY: The required EIR will include evaluation of project and cumulative impacts, mitigation measures and project alternatives. The more notable issues to be analyzed are as follows (this is not intended to be a comprehensive list):

Aesthetics: According to the visual analysis prepared by the applicant (Visual Analysis Report Leigh-Hanson Quarry Extension, Wallace Group, April 2012) the majority of the site would be screened from public views along El Camino Real and Highway 58 by topography and vegetation. However, portions of the excavation slopes will be visible to vehicle traffic along portions of Highway 58 and El Camino Real as the proposed mining activities progress in a northwesterly direction.

As part of the EIR, the above referenced visual analysis will be peer reviewed, by an independent, third-party, qualified visual analysis consultant and supplemented with further research as needed.

Agricultural Resources: The project site is located in the Rural Lands and the Agriculture land use categories and a portion of the site that currently supports grazing would be precluded by the proposed expansion of the existing mining operation. The creation of dust associated with the mining activities has the potential to impact nearby agricultural uses through the spread of vectors and will require further analysis in the EIR.

Air Quality: A greenhouse gas assessment for the project site was prepared by an air quality consultant retained by the applicant (Greenhouse Gas Assessment for the Santa Margarita Quarry Extension Project, Ambient Consultants, May 2012). The project will result in the intermittent disturbance of an approximate 126-acre area. Evaluation of the proposed Project emissions, including Greenhouse Gas emissions increases, and compliance with the Air Pollution Control District (APCD) thresholds and consistency with the APCD Clean Air Plan will require further analysis in the EIR. The EIR will contain a detailed analysis of potential short-term, long-term and cumulative impacts, such as dust, vehicle emissions, naturally occurring asbestos due to ultramafic rock [commonly associated with faults], and impacts to sensitive receptors). As part of the EIR, the above referenced greenhouse gas assessment will be peer reviewed by an independent, third-party, qualified air quality consultant and supplemented further as needed. Identification and discussion of feasible mitigation measures to minimize potentially adverse air quality impact to a level of insignificance will also be included.

Biological Resources: A biological resources analysis of the project site was prepared by a biological consultant retained by the applicant (Biological Resources Assessment Report for Santa Margarita Quarry, WRA Environmental Consultants, May 2012) which provides a detailed description of the site, the biological resources likely to be found in the project area, observations and surveys conducted to confirm the presence of any special status biological resources on the site, the possible impacts to these resources that could result from the proposed project and mitigation measures recommended to reduce impacts to less than significant levels.

In addition to the wildlife report mentioned above, a Rare Plant Survey and an Oak Woodland Assessment Report were prepared by the same consultant. Those reports summarize the results of a special status plant survey and characterize the oak woodland communities present within the proposed project area. The rare plant survey found that of the 67 special status plant species known to occur in the vicinity of the area, twenty species were determined to have a high or moderate potential to occur. However, no special status plant species were observed during the survey work. Two additional surveys are planned to coincide with peak blooming periods for all special status plant species. The results of those surveys will be appended to the report once completed.

The project will impact approximately 11 acres of oak woodland, in the proposed expansion area. Appropriate mitigation for these impacts will be determined in consultation with the County during the EIR process.

The project will disturb approximately 33 additional acres thus increasing the potential that the project would result in significant impacts to the biological resources discussed above. As part of the EIR, the above referenced biological analysis and surveys will be peer reviewed by an independent, third-party, qualified biologist and supplemented further as needed. The EIR will contain a detailed discussion of biological resources and the reports mentioned above will be reviewed and supplemented as necessary during the preparation of the EIR. The EIR will also analyze the secondary effects of truck traffic; blasting in the area; the reclamation plan amendment; as well as the mitigation measures recommended in the biological, rare plant and oak woodland reports.

Cultural Resources: The project is located in an area that is considered culturally sensitive due to the presences of physical features typically associated with prehistoric occupation (the Salinas River). An archaeological and paleontological report was prepared by an archeological consultant retained by the applicant (Phase I Archaeological and Paleontological Survey, Cultural Resource Management Services, January 2011) for the proposed expansion area. The results of the survey indicate that there is no evidence of cultural materials on the property within the area proposed for development. No significant cultural resource impacts are expected to occur, and no mitigation measures are anticipated above what is already required. As part of the EIR, the above referenced archaeological and paleontological report will be peer reviewed by an independent, third-party, qualified an archeological consultant.

Geology and Soils: A geotechnical report was prepared by a geotechnical consultant retained by the applicant (Geotechnical Investigation and Design Recommendations Santa Margarita Quarry, Golder Associates, March 2012/Revised June 2012) that provided slope design recommendations based on a geotechnical model developed from available geological information that includes surface mapping and exploration core drilling.

As part of the EIR, the above-reference geologic report will be peer reviewed and field-verified by an independent, third-party, qualified geotechnical consultant and supplemented further as needed.

Hazards/ Hazardous Materials: The project is located in a high fire hazard area. Fuels and hazardous chemicals such as mineral and lubricating oils, cleaning detergents, welding gasses, and other various chemicals would be used and stored in relatively small amounts. Although the storage of those hazardous materials are regulated by multiple agencies, the risk of leaks and spills, and the impacts related to the storage of those materials will need further evaluation in the EIR.

The project will utilize explosives and blasting, which is subject to OSHA safety requirements. Although current blasting techniques do not require large quantities of explosives, the potential impacts related to blasting will need further evaluation in the EIR and mitigation measures need to be identified and examined.

Land Use: The surrounding land uses include agricultural and industrial uses and residential areas. The project is an extension of an existing previously-approved land use. The EIR will analyze consistency with land use policy/regulations (e.g., general plan [county land use element and ordinance], the Salinas River Planning Area, Clean Air Plan, etc.) The EIR will also analyze potential compatibility issues with surrounding areas. The EIR will include a detailed analysis of existing policies and potential compatibility issues.

Noise: According to the noise assessment prepared by the applicant (Environmental Noise Assessment Santa Margarita Quarry Extension Project, Job #2011-064, Bollard Acoustical Consultants, Inc., April 2012) the project noise levels will impact sensitive receptors located near the proposed expansion area. As part of the EIR, the above referenced noise assessment will be peer reviewed, by an independent, third-party, qualified acoustical consultant and supplemented with further analysis as needed to provide a detailed noise assessment of the proposed project. The Project consistency with the County Noise Element, impacts of drilling, blasting, construction truck travel and operational noise will need to be evaluated in the EIR. All feasible mitigation measures will need to be identified.

Population and Housing: The project is not creating new jobs and is not like to result in a need for a significant amount of new housing, and it will not displace existing housing. Given that impacts to population and housing are not considered significant or potentially significant, further analysis of this topic is not anticipated.

Public Services: No significant project-specific impacts to utilities or public services were identified. The project along with other projects in the area will have a cumulative effect on Sheriff and police resources, fire protection, utilities and energy use and schools. The public services section of the EIR will address a suite of local government and district provided services, including: water supply, wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, schools, libraries, police and fire protection, and emergency response. The proposed Project is not expected to result in a significant increase in the population of the area; therefore, the population-driven public services would not be expected to experience impacts. This section of the EIR should include identification of service providers; discussion of services and identification of impacts and mitigation measures.

Recreation: The project would not generate a significant increase in the use or demand for park and recreational facilities. A Public Facility Fee is currently in place to address cumulative recreational needs. The proposed EIR should include a discussion of possible impacts related to the Salinas River Trail alignment in consultation with the County Parks Division.

Transportation/ Circulation: According to the traffic study prepared by a traffic consultant retained by the applicant (Traffic Impact Analysis Santa Margarita Quarry Extension, Rick Engineering Company, May 2012) the local street system serving the project site includes US101, SR 58, El Camino Real and Santa Barbara Road. The Union Pacific Railroad tracks are located on the east side of El Camino Real. The existing quarry access road crosses the tracks, which includes a signal and automated gate. There are currently 15 full-time employees and the proposed project would not increase the number of employees.

The existing and proposed quarry CUP has an annual production limit of 700,000 tons per year and a maximum limit of 294 truckloads per day. Cumulative vehicle traffic concerns, associated with the existing Hanson Asphalt Plant, the existing Papich Asphalt Plant, the existing asphalt and concrete recycling operation, and the proposed Las Pilitas quarry project, will require analysis in the EIR.

Under the current entitlement the quarry is open 260 days per year and typically operates between 7:00 AM and 8:00 PM (Monday through Friday). Rock sales may operate for a maximum of 16 hours of each 24 hours beginning and ending at 6:00 AM (up to 80 days per year for a public agency contracts). Rock sales may start operations at 5:00 AM (70 days per year for the general public). The permanent asphalt plant can operate from 5:00 AM to 7:00 AM (June 15th to September 15th).

The traffic report concludes, since the proposed project will not generate any new vehicle trips, that the project will not significantly impact existing, or existing plus approved projects, traffic operations on the local roadway network. As part of the EIR, the above-referenced traffic report will be peer reviewed and verified by an independent, third-party, qualified traffic engineer/consultant and supplemented with further analysis as needed to provide a detailed traffic impact assessment of the proposed project. The EIR will also analysis any applicable fee/trip programs to repair road impacts generated from heavy truck traffic.

Water: A portion of the RPA area and buffer area are within the 100-year Salinas River flood elevation; and water is required for material washing and dust control. According to the applicant approximately 365 Acre Feet per Year (AFY) of water will be needed for aggregate processing and dust suppression. However, it should be noted that water usage is dependent on the amount of production and percentage of material that requires washing.

Dust Suppression: Currently the majority of water for the dust suppression comes from a 10 acre impoundment located within the Quarry and from a Use pond located along the Salinas River (see Figure 9 of the Project Description) and the proposed project would continue to use those water resources. Water within the impoundment is collected from runoff and direct rainfall. The impoundment is the primary water source, but when it is dry, supplemental water for dust suppression is pumped from the Use pond. Total volumes of water pumped from the impoundment are approximately 50 AFY and approximately 5 AFY are pumped from the Use pond.

Aggregate processing: Currently the water used in the processing of aggregates is supplied from the Use pond that is recharged from the Source pond. Ground water flows into the Source pond and is pumped out of the pond to the Use pond where it is then piped into the secondary processing plant. Water utilized for aggregate processing is cycled through the secondary processing plant where clays and silts become suspended in the water. The sediment laden water is pumped from the processing plant to a series of sediment ponds where the sediment is allowed to settle out. Approximately 305 AFY of water is needed for aggregate processing. Cumulative impact on the ground water basin will need to be reviewed. As part of the EIR review, a water study assessment consistent with SB610 may need to be prepared.

Sewage Disposal: There is one existing septic tank on-site and it is utilized by the portable office buildings. All other areas of the project site utilize portable restrooms. The portable restrooms are serviced at regular intervals. No changes to the current arrangement are proposed by the applicant.

Potable Water: Drinking water for the project site is currently supplied by a vendor. No changes to the current arrangement are proposed by the applicant.

Wastewater: Based on the proposed project and the design features, wastewater impacts are expected to be less than significant. Further analysis in the EIR is not anticipated.

Alternatives: Discussion and evaluation of project alternatives shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- a) No Project.
- b) Reduced expansion area.

As required by CEQA, a determination will be made as to the environmentally superior alternative. The determination of the environmentally superior alternative will be performed by conducting a comparative analysis for all issue areas of the mitigated impacts for each alternative evaluated throughout the document.

Cumulative Effects: The cumulative impact portion of the assessment will address the cumulative impacts associated with related past, present and reasonably foreseeable projects within the study area. A cumulative project list will need to be identified. The EIR will address all cumulative effects within each area of analysis. Cumulative analysis will include identification and discussion of all cumulative impacts of the Project in relation to other existing and known projects and affected roadways.

REFERENCE MATERIALS: All referenced materials listed below are available on the County of San Luis Obispo web page:

<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning/environmental/EnvironmentalNotices/hansonaggregate.htm?>

- Project Description Santa Margarita Quarry Extension, State Mine ID# 91-40-0003. EnviroMINE, Inc. April 17, 2013.
- Reclamation Plan Amendment Santa Margarita Quarry, State Mine ID# 91-40-0003. EnviroMINE, Inc. April 17, 2013.
- Greenhouse Gas Assessment Santa Margarita Quarry Extension. AMBIENT Air Quality & Noise Consulting. May 5, 2012.
- Traffic Impact Analysis Santa Margarita Quarry Extension, Job # 16611-O. Rick Engineering Company. May 15, 2012.
- Drainage Report Santa Margarita Quarry. Chang Consultants. April 18, 2013.
- Geotechnical Investigation and Design Recommendations Santa Margarita Quarry, Project No. 073-97199. Golder Associates. March 2012/Revised June 2012.
- Hydro Geologic Evaluation Santa Margarita Quarry Extension, Project No.073-97199. Golder Associates. March 2012.
- Phase I Archaeological & Paleontological Survey, APN: 070-131-003 Hanson Quarry, Project No. 46-770. Cultural Resource Management Services. January 25, 2011.
- Environmental Noise Assessment Santa Margarita Quarry Extension Project, Job #2011-064. Bollard Acoustical Consultants, Inc. April 24, 2012.
- Preliminary Determination of Waters of the U.S. Santa Margarita Quarry. WRA Environmental Consultants. April 2012.
- Biological Resources Assessment Report Santa Margarita Quarry. WRA Environmental Consultants. May 2012.
- Oak Woodland Assessment Report Santa Margarita Quarry. WRA Environmental Consultants. April 2012.
- Rare Plant Survey Report Santa Margarita Quarry. WRA Environmental Consultants. April 2012/ Addendum September 2012.
- Visual Analysis Report Lehigh-Hanson Quarry Extension, Santa Margarita, CA. Wallace Group. April 24, 2012.