

**DRAFT EIR OSTER/LAS PILITAS QUARRY  
EFFECTS THAT ARE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT**

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**4.15 EFFECTS THAT ARE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT**

The County of San Luis Obispo conducted a preliminary analysis of the project's impacts through the Notice of Preparation (NOP) process, which was supported by an Initial Study. The NOP and associated Initial Study, dated July 1, 2010, and NOP response letters are included as Appendix A of the EIR. Through the NOP process, the County of San Luis Obispo determined that there was no substantial evidence that the development pursuant to the Conditional Use Permit would cause or otherwise result in significant environmental effects in the resource areas discussed below (see Sections 4.15.1 through 4.15.3). In addition, the analysis conducted for this EIR resulted in conclusions that certain impacts were less than significant (see Sections 4.15.4 through 4.15.31).

No further environmental review of these issues is necessary for the reasons summarized in the following discussion.

**4.15.1 Cultural Resources**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The project is located in an area historically occupied by the Obispeno Chumash and Salinan. According to the County's Notice of Preparation/Initial Study, the project is located in an area that is considered culturally sensitive due to presence of physical features typically associated with prehistoric occupation (i.e., permanent water source). A Phase I (surface) survey was conducted (Heritage Discoveries, Inc., April 16, 2009), which indicated that there was no evidence of cultural materials on the property within the project activity areas. No historic structures are present and no paleontological resources are known to exist in the area. Due to the steepness of the terrain affected by the proposed quarry, the likelihood of major cultural resources being present is very low.

**4.15.2 Population and Housing**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

Existing structures on the larger property that includes the proposed quarry site include a barn, storage shed, shop/garage, a trailer and two single residential structures, all located towards the southern boundary of the site off of SR 58. These structures are limited in number, and support the existing residences and ranch uses located there. They will not be affected by the quarry. The project will not induce growth in the area (as described further in Section 7.1 of this EIR). It will not displace or affect the existing residences on the property. The number of proposed employees is small (three to five), and will not lead to a substantial demand for housing in the area. Energy use is not expected to be excessive (described further in Section 7.2). For these reasons, the project effects relative to population and housing will be less than significant, as described in the IS/NOP.

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**4.15.3 Scenic Vistas/Salinas River Trail (Impact AES-2)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

Although the project will create graded slopes into natural hillsides in the general vicinity of the proposed Salinas River trail corridor, those views will be blocked by existing vegetation and intervening topography.

**4.15.4 Loss of Agricultural Land (Impact AG-1)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The project involves the direct conversion of 1.2 acres of grazing land and loss of access to an additional 0.9 acre. These are relatively small areas and the current agricultural use is of low intensity.

**4.15.5 Cumulative Effects Related to Agricultural Resources (Impact AG-4)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

Countywide, there was a loss of 5,840 acres of agricultural land from 2006 to 2008 (FMMP). The proposed project would result in a loss of approximately 2.1 acres of grazing land which is relatively small in size and is generally of low productivity. This loss does not contribute a considerable or significant proportion of the total agriculture land in the County or of the loss of agricultural land over time. With proper implementation of best use practices and mitigation measures, the impacts related to the introduction of invasive species would be considered less than significant.

**4.15.6 Emissions of Other Criteria Pollutants (CO and SO<sub>2</sub>) (Impact AQ-1c)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

As a general practice, CO concentrations are of concern at high volume roadway intersections that operate at a very congested level of service, or in association with confined areas such as tunnels or parking garages as noted above. Neither of those conditions is associated with the proposed project. For these reasons, CO emissions from blasting are considered less than significant.

The SLOAPCD (2012: Table 3-2) does not provide any standards for SO<sub>2</sub> emissions, and this pollutant is not discussed in the SLOAPCD CEQA Handbook other than its listing in the table of AAQS. Federal and state regulations have already been established to reduce the sulfur content of diesel fuel. This pollutant has not been considered a problem in the County. For these reasons, SO<sub>2</sub> emissions will not represent a significant impact.

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**4.15.7 Creation of Objectionable Odors (Impact AQ-3)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The project proposes to surface mine granitic rock and produce aggregate products for sale. The project will also accept and process “Type A” inert debris, consisting of Portland Cement Concrete and Asphaltic Concrete, to produce recycled material for use in roadway construction. These materials and activities are not expected to generate substantial odors detectable outside the project boundaries.

**4.15.8 Consistency with Clean Air Plan (Impact AQ-4)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The project involves activity and the generation of truck traffic that is consistent with regional growth forecasts and traffic modeling used in air quality planning, and the project is not growth inducing. Therefore, it is consistent with the Clean Air Plan.

**4.15.9 Cumulative Effects Related to Air Quality (Impact AQ-5)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

There are no significant projects, other than the Hanson Santa Margarita Quarry, that are within one mile of the project site (note: this distance is consistent with Section 1.5(h) of the SLO County APCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook), which would warrant consideration for cumulative effects.

**4.15.10 Effect on Wildlife Movement (Impact BIO-10)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The Quarry project is designed such that it will not impact landscape level movement of large mammals, migratory birds or other wildlife.

**4.15.11 Cumulative Effects Related to Biological Resources (Impact BIO-11)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The loss of approximately 41 acres of habitat from this region does not, by itself, constitute a cumulatively considerable biological impact, due to the quantity of surrounding habitat in the region surrounding the Project Site. The Project Applicant proposes the permanent preservation of 68.8 acres of undeveloped land on-site, as mitigation for the loss of Native Habitats. The on-going operations of Hanson Quarry within one mile of the proposed project do not require an increase in the amount of habitat being preserved within the Oster Quarry

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site. Additionally, implementation of a phased reclamation plan upon completion of the quarry operations would restore and replace some of the habitat value and function that was lost during construction and operations of the facility. When the site ceases to be used as an active quarry, the area should have moderate value as a natural area.

**4.15.12 Exposure to Geologically Hazardous Conditions (Impact GEO-2)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The proposed quarry site is not in a location affected by an Alquist-Priolo fault zone, expansive soils, or a 100-year floodplain.

**4.15.13 Policy Consistency and Effects on Future Mining (Impact GEO-5)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The project design also includes the preservation of about 69 acres within a conservation easement intended as mitigation for the biological impacts of the project. This easement would preclude future mining on this portion of the Oster property, but it would not affect the potential for mining granitic rock on nearby properties. To the extent that the conservation easement prevents future residential uses in this area, it may tend to reduce the potential for land use conflicts with future mining on adjacent properties.

**4.15.14 Cumulative Effects Related to Geology (Impact GEO-6)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

Some effects related to geology could be cumulative in nature. These effects include the loss of topsoil through erosion and the discharge of sediment into surface water courses. These effects may be associated with any proposed quarry, or with any other type of development or even with a change in agricultural activities. For these issues, permit requirements and existing statewide programs provide measures that serve to avoid or minimize the potential cumulative effects on a project-by-project basis.

**4.15.15 Greenhouse Gas Generation (Impact GHG-1)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The greenhouse gas emissions generated from the Quarry project do not exceed the Screening Threshold (10,000 MTCO<sub>2</sub>e/year) established for evaluating these emissions.

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**4.15.16 Potential Greenhouse Gas Plan Conflicts (Impact GHG-2)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The Quarry project is consistent with the applicable Greenhouse Gas Emission policies of the Open Space and Conservation Element of the County General Plan. No conflicts are anticipated.

**4.15.17 Cumulative Effects Related to GHG Emissions (Impact GHG-3)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The greenhouse gas emissions generated from the Quarry project are negligible even when combined with the emissions from the Hanson Quarry. Both quarry projects are strategically co-located within the La Panza Granitics, a large area that is classified as MRZ-2 by the California State Geological Survey (1989:9). Notwithstanding the size of this area, these two mines are effectively located near future development within the County, such that extensive importation of quarry materials from outside the region can be minimized. The resulting reduction of truck traffic and corresponding greenhouse gas reduction can also be expected.

**4.15.18 Effect on Regional or Local Evacuation Plans (Impact HAZ-3)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The Project is not expected to conflict with any emergency response or regional or local evacuation plans. The project will have its own dedicated access drive from SR 58, which will not affect access to either of the two residences located elsewhere on the property, or any other residences in the vicinity. Emergency response is provided by the CalFire/County Fire Station No. 40 on Parkhill Road, approximately 1.5 miles southeast from the project site. The access drive for the project is designed to meet CalFire requirements.

**4.15.19 Airport Flight Plans (Impact HAZ-4)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The site is not located in an area under an airport master plan, airport land use plan or within two miles of an airport landing strip. The nearest commercial airports are in: San Luis Obispo (13 miles) and Paso Robles (18 miles). The nearest private airstrip is Bogdan Airport, approximately 2 miles east of the Quarry site. The proposed quarry will not involve any tall structures or activities that would interfere with aircraft operations in the vicinity. For these reasons, the proposed project would not expose people to a safety risk associated with airport flight patterns.

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**4.15.20 Cumulative Effects Related to Hazards (Impact HAZ-7)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

All present and future granite quarries which transport, manage and handle explosive and hazardous materials are subject to applicable regulatory requirements that mitigate their potential impacts. All quarries and major construction projects are subject to fugitive dust control and worker safety measures that minimize the potential for major or widespread infections of Valley Fever.

**4.15.21 Demand for Public Services (Impact PS-2)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The project will contribute a small increment to demand for other public services, which can be provided by the appropriate public service providers (police, schools, roads and solid waste).

**4.15.22 Cumulative Effects Related to Public Services and Utilities (Impact PS-3)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

Public facility fee programs (Title 18 of the San Luis Obispo County Code), and school fee programs (State Government Code 65995 et seq.) have been adopted to address this impact.

**4.15.23 Increase Use or Demand for Recreational Facilities (Impact REC-1)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The quarry project will not increase population nor provide any new housing, and will not increase the demand for recreational facilities.

**4.15.24 Cumulative Effects Related to Recreation (Impact REC-3)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

All present and future granite quarries, as well as future development in the Salinas River corridor region, will be subject to development review and implementation of County policies and requirements that would avoid effects on recreational resources along the river.

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**4.15.25 Traffic Volume Increases – LOS (Impact TRAFFIC-1b)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The project will cause small increases in the traffic delay at intersections in the project vicinity, and on the traffic density on US Highway 101 and the SR 58 freeway ramps. In all cases, these changes will not alter the existing Level of Service (LOS) and in all cases the existing LOS is within applicable standards.

**4.15.26 Cumulative Effects Related to Wastewater (Impact WW-2)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

As with the present quarry proposal, appropriate percolation test results and documentation of compliance with other County regulations related to installation of septic systems and leach fields will be required for future projects, prior to the issuance of permits associated with the on-site wastewater disposal system.

**4.15.27 Increased Use of Surface Water (Impact WQ-3)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The project will increase total water use on the property from approximately 2 afy to 7 afy. This amount is within the capacity of Well A, which is proposed to serve the project, and much lower than the available supply represented by the base flow in the Salinas River.

**4.15.28 Effect on Community Water Service Provider (Impact WQ-4)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The nearest water service provider is CSA 23 in Santa Margarita, which will not be affected by the project.

**4.15.29 Cumulative Effects Related to Water Quality and Supply (Impact WQ-5)**

**Reasons Why Effects Were Not Found Significant**

The project, in conjunction with the nearby Hanson Santa Margarita Quarry and other uses, will continue the use of surface and shallow subsurface water from the Salinas River. Based on the anticipated cumulative use and the pattern of topography and limited potential for development, the cumulative water use will be much less than the minimum flows in the Salinas River. Potential water quality effects from all future uses and development will remain subject to existing and future regulations.

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