

**Public Comments Pertaining to
Oster (Las Pilitas Quarry) CUP / Reclamation Plan (DRC2009-00025)**

Date: August 3, 2010
Name: Melissa Harder
Address: 4605 Parkhill Road, Santa Margarita 93453
Telephone: 805.438.3396
Email: msaintj@yahoo.com

Comments:

To begin, I am opposed to this project. Although my family and I live approximately 5 miles up Parkhill Road from this proposed project site, we will be negatively impacted by the traffic, noise, potentially dust, and change in aesthetics as we drive past every day. With that, I understand the process for project approval and have 3 main concerns.

First, I am quite concerned with the traffic impacts this project will have. The number of truck trips proposed represents a significant impact that cannot be mitigated, in my opinion. The safety risk to residents on Parkhill Road and Highway 58 as well as motorists and pedestrians in the town of Santa Margarita, particularly adjacent to the park and the elementary school, is too great, in my opinion, and should not be allowed.

Second, I have concerns over the water usage at this proposed operation. The amount of water proposed to be used in this operation is tremendous, and I believe it is underestimated. If this is phase one of the operation, how many more phases will there be and will the water usage impact be evaluated with each phase? And if standard operating procedure for extracting and selling aggregate involves washing then where will that happen if not onsite? And although I'm sure there have been geological surveys of the area to determine the type of aggregate to be extracted, but what if potentially salable product is found that would require processing or washing? Have those activities been addressed?

A second component of the water and habitat concern is what will the environmental impacts be as a result of runoff from the facility as well as the loss of water shed? How will water usage and waste water handling at this facility affect the surrounding area and the environment, upstream and downstream?

In my opinion, impacts to neighboring water supply wells from long term usage of large quantities of ground water at this facility as well as environmental impacts (i.e., animal habitat)

should be evaluated. I do not believe this quantity of water being extracted from aquifers shared by neighboring residences could be considered less than significant or could be mitigated if it proves detrimental to the water supply in the area. Ground water impacts as well as impacts to habitat should be thoroughly evaluated and understood before any project of this magnitude in this particular location is approved.

Third, I have an ugly picture in my mind as to how this area will look as the mountain is removed and rebuilt into a terraced landscape over time. We bought property in this area because of the natural beauty that surrounds us and the peaceful setting. A quarry would mean a significant and unnatural change in the landscape that would affect not only our own peace of mind living in the area but also our property value if we ever decided to sell. Our property value has had a significant negative impact from the economy without the impacts from a quarry in plain view of the road to our house. At least with the Hansen/Santa Margarita quarry, it's far enough away, has a very large buffer zone around it, and has an entrance on a road that can handle more traffic without major safety risks. This project location, on the other hand, does not and should not be approved as a result of the many significant negative impacts that do not appear to have reasonable alternatives or mitigation.

I believe that the EIR should be as thorough and detailed as possible to evaluate all impacts as well as reasonable alternatives when impacts are shown to be significant. From the information I've seen, there appear to be many significant impacts that do not have reasonable alternatives or options, which should render this project as inappropriate and not approvable. At a minimum, all impacts from this project should be thoroughly evaluated and understood prior to approval since this is the time to fix anything that doesn't look right with the project. I've seen projects change after receiving approval and I've seen projects with significant impacts continue to operate, even with numerous complaints. The time to evaluate is now, not after the project has been approved since a project would likely not be stopped once it gets started, regardless of the impacts.

Thank you for your time.