



To: Marti Fisher/Planning/COSLO@Wings,
Cc:
Bcc:
Subject: Fw: FYI - Las Pilitas Resources/ Oster Quarry (Hwy. 58 Quarry) - Concerned residents' concerns
From: Jeffrey Oliveira/Planning/COSLO - Friday 08/06/2010 02:00 PM

Begin forwarded message:

From: quarry info <hwy58quarryinfo@gmail.com>

Date: July 13, 2010 8:48:26 PM PDT

To: undisclosed-recipients;

Subject: Quarry impacts/scoping letter comments due by July 25th

LAS PILITAS RESOURCES / OSTER QUARRY (HWY 58 QUARRY) is located on Hwy 58 at the Salinas River.

The public has until July 25th, 2010 (possibly until Aug. 3rd but we're uncertain so sticking with earlier date) to make comments pertaining to impacts this project may cause as part of the "scoping" process for the EIR. Written comments should be submitted to Jeff Oliveira, Dept. of Planning and Building, 976 Osos Street, Room 300, San Luis Obispo, CA. 93408.

Everyone is busy, but this is important for our future quality of life! Thank you for all your time and energy for getting the word out on this thing.

It is good to also send an e-mailed copy of your comments to: "mailto:"jnall@co.slo.ca.us "mailto:"ecarroll@co.slo.ca.us , and "mailto:"jpatterson@co.slo.ca.us

John Nall and Ellen Carroll are supervisors of Mr. Oliveira in the Planning Dept., and Jim Patterson is our District 5 supervisor. We would also appreciate a copy so we can follow up with the firm assigned to the EIR and verify that all comments have been included. The law requires all comments made by members of the public to be addressed in the EIR.

The applicant has already conducted several initial studies that should be on the county's web site but were not as of the scoping meeting last Thurs. Mr. Oliveira "<mailto:joliveira@co.slo.ca.us>" needs to hear from the public that these studies should be accessible, and it would have been preferable to have them on-line before the scoping meeting. The noise, traffic, and cultural studies have been reviewed by some and the general opinion is they appear to be inadequate and in some aspects misleading. The county needs to hear that the studies prepared for the Initial Study are inadequate, unacceptable, and unfair to the needs of the community. We have a rare opportunity to have some "impact" on the process. Here's some of the impacts this project may present.

Aesthetics

Aesthetic and visual impacts associated with the project need to be evaluated as part of the EIR as the project will change the visual character of the area.

In the SLO County Open Space Element Table VR-2: Hwy 58 from the Santa Margarita Urban Reserve Line to the Kern County line is a candidate for a scenic corridor.

View from Hwy 58 will be impacted

View from 101 needs to be evaluated for possible impacts.

Project is adjacent to a "Scenic Historic Bridge" - 1914

Agricultural Resources

This project may impair agricultural use of other properties.

Blasting is known to be a disturbance to livestock and domestic animals.

Dust and air contaminants can affect agricultural production.

Air Quality

Greenhouse Gas Emissions needs study. Removing vegetation from a site this large is enough reason to study this. Vegetation absorbs carbon dioxide. How will this loss be mitigated.(compensated for) and what monitoring (enforcement mechanism) will be in place?

Will the perimeter of the site be monitored for PM10, PM 2.5, and the presence of Crystalline Silica? Many modern quarries require constant monitoring samples. Particulate matters are known to cause respiratory illnesses, lung damage, and be particularly hard for those with asthma to tolerate. Crystalline Silica is known to cause Silicosis. Blasting rock creates respirable fractured crystalline silica and is not visible, but is caught in the lungs forever.

Valley Fever is known to occur in this area and a recent report states that cases are on the rise in the county. How will this increased risk due to soil disturbance be addressed?

The application states that portable crushing and screening will be used as needed. NOTE: Portable crushers are not usually enclosed. How will dust from these operations be contained?

Will quarry processing equipment be fully enclosed to minimize dust and fugitive dust?

This site does not have the buffers that the other existing quarries near Santa Margarita have built in due to their siting.

At what wind speed will quarry operations cease?

How will wind speed restrictions be monitored and enforced?

What measures will be taken to mitigate dust during transportation?

Will there be any way to monitor and enforce this?

Do the truck trips proposed include the delivery of additional hazardous materials for plant operations?

Biological Resources

Quarrying/mining operations are known to result in a loss of unique and special status species because of their destructive nature.

Applicant states in Initial Study that avoidance will be a mitigation technique.

Will it be possible to monitor and enforce avoidance of certain species of plants and wildlife?

Will wetland or riparian habitat be impacted? This project is on property with Salinas River frontage.

Biological studies need to be conducted at the proper time of year and for appropriate duration to be meaningful. Several months are required, usually April to August, not October/November.

Cultural Resources

Project area is known to be rich with cultural history.

Native American representatives need to be consulted. It does not appear that any attempt at this was made in the Initial Studies.

The disturbance of cultural resources should not be limited to the immediate area being mined. It needs to encompass any and all areas that are incidentally affected by quarrying. Examples would be the proposed turnout lane, and any portions of the site that are disturbed in any way.

It is believed that the historic workers camp for the Salinas Reservoir Dam project built in the 1940's was located in this vicinity. This should be part of the Cultural Resources Study.

Geology and Soils

Modifying topography by removing material to new unexposed layers will possibly cause erosion, unstable soil condition, and changes in drainage and surface runoff characteristics.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Blasting will be part of the plant's normal operating cycle.

Blasting and heavy equipment present a heightened fire danger.

There are no proper turnouts, or road shoulders, or ways to skirt dense truck traffic on Hwy 58. How will emergency response vehicles get by large trucks and the other traffic caught behind the truck traffic? Cal Fire emergency vehicles from Park Hill Road Station respond on a regular basis to incidents West of the project site. Their response time could be greatly impacted by the project created traffic issues.

There is a high pressure fuel line running through this area. Where is it located in relationship to the blasting being proposed? What are the hazards?

The State Water Project runs through the project site. Where is it located in relationship to operations and incidental operations? What potential impacts exist? Has DWR been made aware of the existence of this project?

Do repeated truck trips over the above mentioned lines create any potential hazards?

As mentioned in air quality, PM's and crystalline silica are known to cause severe health hazards. Many have shared that the prevailing wind direction is almost straight up Parkhill Rd. from the quarry site.

Noise

What will noise levels do the quality of life for area residents?

What will the operating hours be? Will Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays be part of that schedule?

Will any form of noise exemption be required? How will the county monitor and enforce such an exemption?

Will over 200 trucks a day create any additional noise to residents?

This project needs to be cumulatively added to other exiting noise sources.

Noise Study needs to address how the noise level will change with the shifting terrain a quarry operation creates. Also needs to address the change in existing noise levels created by

changing the local topography. This needs to be included in the noise analysis.

Population/Housing

9 (d) in Initial Study asks : Will the project use substantial amounts of fuel or energy?

Is water something that falls into this category?

Public Services/ Utilities

Will the project have an affect upon public services such as fire protection, roads, police protection, schools?

Would a heightened fire danger for a large operation that includes the use of explosives and heavy machinery potentially create a need for increased fire protection to surrounding residents?

Would placing more than 200 loaded trucks a day that carry in excess of 20 tons per load have any impact on the infrastructure of our existing road system?

Transportation/Circulation

From page 1 of Traffic Impact Study for Las Pilitas Rock Quarry (located on hwy 58 @ Salinas River), "SR 101 interchange at El Camino Real was not analyzed in this report. It is the applicant's opinion that the interchange will not likely experience an increase in truck trips due to the operation of the proposed project. They say there is no increase in demand for material, they will just be taking other quarry business. If they take any business from Rock Canyon Quarry, that is a increase of trucks, because Rocky Canyon trucks do not go through Margarita, they use Santa Barbara Rd. onramp.

Parkhill Rd. / Hwy. 58 traffic was not addressed in the initial traffic study.

Are there any traffic concerns when you try to get over 200 heavy trucks a day from Parkhill Rd. area through Santa Margarita and on to Hwy. 101?

Should we accept the applicant's opinion as fact?

Do you have local knowledge of problem areas, above average accident rates, etc.?

Is there a plan for large trucks to enter and exit the tight quarry site? Will excess truck traffic use Parkhill Rd as a turnaround?

Will excessive truck traffic be present in the town of Santa Margarita while waiting to be radioed in to the quarry?

Is there any monitoring and/or enforcement planned on a truck limit?

Are the 30-50 truck trips a day that already exist from an existing adjacent trucking facility going to be factored into the total number of trips being studied?

What responsibility will the county accept for property damages, or fatalities caused by the failure to properly study the traffic impacts on an already very dangerous route.

Water

From Initial Study: "based on available information, the proposed water source is not known to have any significant availability or quality problems."

Were any residents asked about this?

Dust control alone could use 20,000 to 40,000 gallons per day in the dry months, based on

information from other quarries.

Will there be monitoring and enforcement mechanisms related to water use?

They may need an appropriate water right if they plan on storing water or pumping it out of an immediate watershed.

How do the new water diversion regulations (from the State Water Resources Board) apply to this project?

It is unlawful to divert at a rate which would infringe on the rights of others.

How will this mine's intense water usage affect the rest of us?

How will the applicant's statement that they "will not be washing any aggregate" be regulated?

Is it a reasonable foreseeable impact to assume that washing aggregate will occur?

The applicant needs to provide market research that suggests unwashed aggregate is something a market exists for.

Land Use

The zoning of surrounding properties is incorrect in the project application. Rural residential zoning exists to the South and East, not Rural Lands as stated.

The number of residences that will be affected has been misrepresented in the application.

Selective mapping represents that the quarry site is only surrounded by large parcels of rural land.

The impacts to residents are significant if you identify that residents actually exist.

It is unfair, unrealistic, unreasonable, and possibly unlawful to not consider that the interests of other property owners and community members be considered as equal to the interests of the applicants.

The quality of life, the health, and the property values of a community will all be on the decline and should be given collectively the same consideration the applicant is being given in regards to the feasibility of this project.

Environmental Justice

Geographic inequity describes a situation in which the burdens of undesirable land uses are concentrated in certain neighborhoods while their benefits are received elsewhere.

This community already is home to two mining/quarry facilities that have reserves far in excess of what the proposed life span of this project would be.

Each of these existing facilities is also located (sited) in such a way that their impacts are far less dramatic to the community.

Is there good reason (benefits outweigh impacts) why the community should be made to shoulder the added impacts of a third rock quarry?

Groundwater Contamination

If the proposed mine extends below the water table, it could affect wells in the surrounding area. Residue from explosives, spilled fuel, and other chemicals could seep into the ground water.

Surface Water Contamination

In addition to carrying residue from explosives, spilled fuel, and other chemicals, runoff from the site could silt up the Salinas River and other bodies of water.

Vibration

The enormous explosions associated with hard rock mining have been known to crack foundations and destroy drilled wells miles away.

Is the applicant willing to reimburse for damages when such events occur?

Dangerous Precedents

Once an area starts multiple mining operations, it quickly becomes less than pristine. If this proposed industrial mine penetrates the existing zoning, others will follow the lead. Many of the parcels in this area have granite deposits.

Scale Up/ Sell Out

Once an operation like this gets permitted, there is little to prevent the miner from vastly expanding the scope of a project, adding new operations, and sending trucks out in greater numbers.

Is there anything to keep the "local" principals of this LLC from selling out to a much larger corporation that has resources to push the boundaries even further.

Keep in mind that you can send as many letters as you like regarding this project. So if you forget something you think is important, just write another.