

Las Pilitas Quarry

Scoping Meeting

August 14, 2017 6PM

Santa Margarita Elementary School Cafeteria

County Attendees

Sup. Debbie Arnold, 5th District

Airlin Singewald, Planning, Project Manager

Rob Fitzroy, Planning, Deputy Director

Karen Nall, Planning, Supervising Planner

Michael Conger, Planning, Planner

COMMENTS

- **Vegetation removal.** Some concerned that there has already been vegetation removal and site looks “like an eyesore.” Others note that this was just for a firebreak.
- **Reduced Project Alternative.** Who is going to monitor this alternative to make sure that there is actually a 50% reduction of truck trips?
- **Environmental justice.** Is Santa Margarita economically disadvantaged? Consider if there is an issue with undesirable projects focused on this community.
- **Valley fever.** How will valley fever be addressed with the quarry?
- **Water.** Whose water are they using? Salinas River water? Groundwater?
- **Traffic.** Consider safety on Highway 58. Take a second look at the safety issue. Trucks lining up and queuing, additional traffic on Highway 58. Conflicts with bicyclists.
- **Traffic safety.** Entrance, turn lanes, queuing.
- **Property values.** Should be considered.
- **Traffic.** Increased trips from Santa Margarita agricultural cluster development. Safety issues with parking at cemetery on both sides of the highway.
- **Property values.** Concerns with how it will be affected.
- **Air quality.** How will this project meet air quality standards when air quality standards are already failing in the South County? Request comparative element in EIR. How can the mitigation be enforceable if it is unable to enforce the standards in South County?
- **Traffic.** Make sure it considers the 100-lot Santa Margarita Ranch cluster development.
- **Quality of existing EIR.** Prefer new EIR to revised EIR. Original EIR was done by a quarry-friendly company with bad data. Request that it be thrown out and start over again with a new consultant.

- **Consultant selection.** The applicant and the people of Santa Margarita should agree on the consultant who will prepare the EIR.
- **Fire severity.** Four years of drought. Trees are dying. Concerned with evacuation and being able to get out of Parkhill area.
- **Water.** Concerns with water use and supply. Water use will be needed to control the dust. Concerns with extracting dust-suppression water from the Salinas River.
- **Reduced project alternative.** Confused at how the reduced project alternative fits in. Is it a counter-proposal? Are the two projects running concurrently?
- **Traffic.** Concerns with re-routing trucks to Santa Barbara Road interchange, when combined with trucks from Rocky Canyon.
- **Runoff.** Concerned concrete washout runoff will go into the Salinas River.
- **Traffic.** Concerns with safety of hauling and loading of trucks. What is breaking distance with double-trucks fully loaded?
- **Traffic.** Previous EIR did not analyze traffic coming down I and H Street to avoid back-ups on 58.
- **Traffic.** Safety of 90-degree turn on J Street.
- **Denial.** Wasn't the project denied? Why should we have to go back through this process again if it was already denied? The only thing that has changed is one of the elected supervisors.
- **Baseline.** Concerns with using 2014 as a baseline for a new EIR. Truck trips are a specific concern.
- **Comments.** Requests that Draft EIR commenting not be limited to new information – that the public have the ability to comment on the whole EIR.
- **Fire Evacuation.** Concerns with access for Cal Fire. Highway 58 is the one and only road out.
- **Traffic.** Impact at El Camino Real and Santa Barbara and US 101 and Santa Barbara. A lot of traffic already from State Hospital, residences, and Rocky Canyon. Additional traffic could be significant.
- **Traffic – Reduced Project.** How will the routing of truck trips away from town be enforced with the reduced project alternative?
- **Safety.** Concerns with traffic safety and conflicts with elementary school. Walkie-talkies and cones would not be sufficient mitigation for hundreds of truck trips.
- **Cumulative impacts - dust.** Hanson quarry plus this quarry – significant amount of dust and dirt. Hanson has been generating more dust recently. Amount now is a lot more than several years ago. With additional quarry, there will be problems.
- **Traffic.** Concerns with traffic added to Santa Barbara Road interchange and south Atascadero area.
- **Traffic.** Bicyclist conflict should be included in the scope.
- **Traffic.** Routing and proximity to school. All it takes is one trip with distraction and a child would be killed. How do you mitigate a dead child?
- **Performance bond.** Applicant should post a performance bond for any condition violations so that we keep the applicant to their word.
- **Comments from original EIR.** Please carry these forward into the new EIR.
- **Consultant selection.** Concerns with basing decision on a single bid. Encourage a re-bid.
- **Traffic.** Safety – trucks and children. Bicycles have a 3-foot passing law now, and the road is not wide enough.

- **Reduced project alternative.** Math on the truck-trips doesn't seem to add up. Are the truck trips assuming single or double-loads?
- **Water.** EIR evaluated water quality, but not water quantity. Any wells need to be metered and monitored.
- **Commenting.** Expressing frustration that the community has already put forward tremendous effort commenting on this project. We want to make sure that all past comments are considered on this EIR. We also want to carry forward the old record (last CUP) as part of the new record (new CUP) for this project.
- **Traffic.** Concerns with traffic diverting onto I Street to avoid truck traffic. Only other through-street in town. I Street doesn't have sidewalks. Concerned with high speeds and presence of children. Bicyclists also divert down I Street. No safety precautions exist on I Street. Trucks could also divert down I Street.
- **Traffic.** EIR should consider new traffic from brand new vineyards that have developed over the last several years along 58 and Pozo Roads. Consider traffic during crush and harvest season.
- **Dust.** Dust is a particular issue during harvest because of vineyard practices. Will the quarry scale down during that time?
- **Traffic.** Truck drivers are professional. Trucks already use the road frequently and no child has been hurt. We should all be careful when driving a vehicle.
- **Consultant selection.** Concerned that applicant gets to choose the consultant. Concerned with who the partners in the applicant's LLC are.
- **CalTrans coordination.** Santa Margarita Design Plan addresses aesthetics and preservation of a rural community. Addressed speed-reduction measures on Highway 58. Cal Trans wouldn't allow them, though. How does Cal Trans feel about the highway? They have made it clear that it is their highway and they get the final say.
- **Traffic safety.** Commenter hauls cattle along 229 and 58 and has done so for years. There are no safety issues. It's a state highway and it's there for trucks to use. Trucks aren't the problem. Distracted car drivers are.
- **Traffic.** If traffic is an issue, why isn't it a problem for Hanson or Navajo quarries?
- **Compatibility.** Many of the neighbors who are concerned about this project already live near a rock quarry.
- **Water.** If water availability is a concern, the County should consider north county water that is diverted to San Luis Obispo via the Salinas Dam.
- **Traffic.** Truck trips need to count empty trucks, not just full loads.
- **Traffic.** Truck traffic is significant when you include the grape and vineyard trucks.
- **Noise.** Use of jake-breaks to slow down on curves on 58.
- **Traffic.** Existing AM-peak hour back-up at 58/El Camino Real is already significant. Trucks may back up onto the railroad tracks. Standard should be "not one truck trip through town." Would like to see this project use the Hanson access road and build a bridge across the river. Taft (Santa Clara Road) was able to build a bridge, why can't this quarry?
- **Traffic.** Santa Barbara Road is now a high-density residential area.
- **Traffic.** Trucks already divert onto I Street. Concerns with exhaust fumes.
- **Traffic.** Semis backing up all the way past the elementary school at 58 and El Camino Real. Railroad hauls a lot of cars, and back-up can be significant when waiting for train.
- **Traffic.** Vehicles diverting onto I Street. Additional traffic will make distracted driving worse.

- **Traffic.** EIR did not address cycling issue at all. Comments about cycling were dismissed because people only ride on the weekends. That is not the case. Many regular riders and tourists ride on weekdays. Address weekday rider safety and the 3-foot passing law. To address this, there needs to be roadway mitigation. You must mitigate safety. Cannot create a Class I for safety. Need to come up with some sort of workable mitigation.
- **Cumulative impact analysis.** Consider not just the agricultural cluster but future development on the Santa Margarita Ranch.
- **Traffic.** Please consider the recently adopted County Bikeways Plan. Recommend rumble strips, buffered bike lanes, or protected bike lanes as mitigation.
- **Valley fever.** Topaz solar farm had particularly high rate of valley fever cases. Please take this into account.
- **Safety – Staging Area.** Where is the staging area? How do you get in and out? Don't defer this to a later time.
- **Traffic.** As a truck driver, I can't go over the line to pass a bicyclist when I have a heavy load. So I have to go extremely slow, because there is no physical way to pass. Traffic analysis should consider that.
- **Pavement quality.** Trucks will affect damage pavement and should pay to resurface it.
- **Need.** Do we really need another quarry when Hanson and Rocky Canyon are only operating at 50 percent capacity?
- **Reduced project alternative.** Confused by the reduced project alternative. But we're talking about the "proposed project." So is the reduced alternative not the proposed project? It sounds like they actually want to do the reduced project. What do they *really* want?
- **Traffic.** Clarify the metric. Consistently use round-trips or single-way-trips. Language should be consistent throughout all documents. Otherwise it is extremely confusing.
- **Unmitigable impacts.** Do you just ignore these? How can you approve a project with an impact that cannot be mitigated?
- **Oak removal.** EIR should address limitation on removal of oak woodlands, which is a new regulation that was not in place during the last EIR?
- **Public benefits.** What benefits will the project have on the community of Santa Margarita?
- **Valley fever.** Speaking as a nurse, this is a very serious disease. Residents of Parkhill Road are particularly susceptible. Additional public health concerns with dust and use of dust-controlling surfactants, diesel exhaust.
- **Hours of operation.** What are the hours of operation?
- **Air quality and noise.** Study how far the dust will go up Parkhill Road. Also study noise and sound. Don't limit the analysis to just half-mile around the quarry. Sound and wind travel up to the Parkhill area.