



Notice of Preparation – Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report

SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND BUILDING

976 OSOS STREET | ROOM 200 | SAN LUIS OBISPO | CALIFORNIA 93408 | (805) 781-5600

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DATE: July 14, 2017

TO: Responsible Agencies, Trustee Agencies, and Interested Persons

FROM: Department of Planning and Building
976 Osos St., Room 300
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408-2040

PROJECT TITLE: Oster (Las Pilitas Quarry) Conditional Use Permit / Reclamation Plan
DRC2016-00115, ED16-340

PROJECT APPLICANT: Las Pilitas, LLC (Agent – T. Keith Gurnee)

RESPONSES DUE BY: August 28, 2017

The County of San Luis Obispo will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the above-referenced project. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

Please provide us the following information at your earliest convenience, but not later than the 45-day comment period, which began with your agency's receipt of the Notice of Preparation (NOP).


1. **NAME OF CONTACT PERSON.** (Please include address, e-mail and telephone number)
2. **PERMIT(S) or APPROVAL(S) AUTHORITY.** Please provide a summary description of these and send a copy of the relevant sections of legislation, regulatory guidance, etc.
3. **ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION.** What environmental information must be addressed in the Environmental Impact Report to enable your agency to use this documentation as a basis for your permit issuance or approval?
4. **PERMIT STIPULATIONS/CONDITIONS.** Please provide a list and description of standard stipulations (conditions) that your agency will apply to features of this project. Are there other conditions that have a high likelihood of application to a permit or approval for this project? If so, please list and describe.
5. **ALTERNATIVES.** What alternatives does your agency recommend be analyzed in the EIR?

6. REASONABLY FORESEEABLE PROJECTS, PROGRAMS or PLANS. Please name any future project, programs or plans that you think may have an overlapping influence with the project as proposed.
7. RELEVANT INFORMATION. Please provide references for any available, appropriate documentation you believe may be useful to the county in preparing the EIR. Reference to and/or inclusion of such documents in an electronic format would be appreciated.
8. FURTHER COMMENTS. Please provide any further comments or information that will help the county to scope the document and determine the appropriate level of environmental assessment.

The project description, location, and the probable environmental effects are contained in the attached materials.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date, **but not later than 45 days after receipt of this notice.**

Please send your response to Airlin M. Singewald, Project Manager at the address shown above. As requested above, we will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

Signature 
Airlin M. Singewald, Project Manager
Telephone: (805) 781-5198
Email: asingewald@co.slo.ca.us

Section 1 Reference: California Administrative Code, Title 14, Section 15082

Exhibits:

- A. Project Description and Preliminary Environmental Review Summary



Notice of Preparation – Revised Draft Environmental Impact Report: Exhibit A

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PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW SUMMARY FOR LAS PILITAS QUARRY

PROJECT TITLE: Oster (Las Pilitas Quarry) Conditional Use Permit / Reclamation Plan DRC2016-00115, ED16-340

PROJECT APPLICANT: Las Pilitas, LLC (Agent: T. Keith Gurnee)

BACKGROUND: Las Pilitas, LLC (Applicant) applied for a Conditional Use Permit and Reclamation Plan (DRC2009-00025) in October 2009 to allow for a new aggregate quarry. The County published a Final EIR for the project in November 2014. The County Board of Supervisors denied the project in May 2015, without certifying the Final EIR. In May 2017, the Applicant applied for an identical project on the same site (DRC2016-00115) and requested the County use the November 2014 Final EIR, where applicable, to prepare a Revised Draft EIR and evaluate a Reduced Project Alternative.

PROJECT LOCATION: The proposed project is within the Rural Lands land use category and is located at 6660 Calf Canyon Way (north side of Highway 58), east of the Salinas River Bridge and approximately ¼ mile west of the Parkhill Road intersection, east of the community of Santa Margarita. The site is in the Las Pilitas sub-area of the North County planning area, within the Energy Extractive 1 Combining Designation.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The County will use the November 2014 Final EIR, where applicable, to prepare a Revised Draft EIR and evaluate a Reduced Project Alternative for the Las Pilitas aggregate quarry.

The project evaluated in the November 2014 Final EIR is described as follows:

Proposed Project

A request for a Conditional Use Permit and Reclamation Plan to allow for an aggregate quarry, and asphalt and concrete recycling facility. The Applicant is requesting a 30-year timeframe for the mining operation and eventual reclamation of the site, with a maximum annual extraction of 500,000 tons. The project will result in the disturbance of approximately 60 acres on two parcels totaling approximately 203 acres in size (APN 070-141-070 = 66.5 acres, APN 070-141-071 = 137.3 acres).

The proposed project would be implemented in two stages and would include the following:

- **Initial Stage:** Installation of a truck scale, portable office, access road construction and landscaping. The production of aggregate material would start with removing and stockpiling overburden for future reclamation use, and excavating, processing and stockpiling of decomposed granite (DG) and granite rock. This initial extraction would occur towards the center of the site, extending towards the north and northeast. Processing of excavated material

will be done by portable crushing and screening equipment as needed. According to the Applicant, this phase would yield up to 500,000 tons of material annually and last approximately 5 years. The annual rate establishes a yearly maximum for the life of the project. (See pages 2-3 and 2-4 of the FEIR).

- Follow Up Stage: Consists of continued excavation, processing and stockpiling of DG and granitic rock at a maximum annual rate of up to 500,000 tons. In addition, this stage of operations would include the recycling of concrete and asphalt. Rock and recycled material would be processed by portable and/or fixed plant equipment. Reclamation would begin in this phase as the upper benches of the mine are excavated and established.
- Operational Details: The proposed mining operation would commence with clearing of vegetation and topsoil overburden from the area of excavation for later use. The aggregate material will then be removed by a wheel loader, hydraulic excavator and/or bulldozer for sorting by size and stockpiled for sale. Material would be loaded by a front end loader for the smaller material while large rocks would be loaded with a hydraulic excavator. Trucks would proceed to a scale for weighing and ticketing before leaving the site. In the event that the source material becomes too consolidated to be ripped by heavy equipment, the aggregate material will be loosened by blasting.

Blasting activities include drilling into the source material and adding explosives into the holes for detonation. All blasting would be performed by a California Licensed blaster and would occur up to 20 times per year. The material will then be brought down from the mine for sizing, sorting and stockpiled for processing. A portion of the high quality material will be sorted for use in the manufacturing of building materials and sold for specialty applications. The remainder of the material would be sold for commercial applications that do not require high quality specifications (e.g., road base).

- Reclamation and Revegetation: Reclamation of the site would consist of slope preparation and revegetation. As the mining of designated areas is completed and operations have moved on from one bench to the next, the slope of the completed areas will be contoured as appropriate for continued future use as ranching and grazing land. Finished slopes will be no greater than 1.5:1 ratio (1.5 feet horizontal for every 1 foot of vertical drop) with a 25-foot wide bench every 50 vertical feet. Benches would be sloped back into the hill with a ditch at the bottom of the slope to control any stormwater runoff or debris that may roll downslope. Stockpiled overburden soils excavated from the site would be applied to the finished slopes to be reclaimed. The slopes would then be replanted with native vegetation prior to the rainy season to prevent erosion.

Recycling: Asphalt and concrete debris from construction sites would be brought to the site for recycling. Material will be inspected and scaled, then dumped in appropriate stockpiles for processing. All materials for recycling will be required to be free of oil, plastics, steel pipe, wood, or any other waste. The material would be processed by the same portable crushing and screening equipment that is used in the processing of the mined materials. The recycled material would be stockpiled for public sale and reused.

It is important to note that the project does not include any provisions for asphalt production, nighttime activities or associated nighttime lighting. In addition, the project does not include the storage of fuel on-site.

Reduced Project Alternative

The Revised EIR would also evaluate a Reduced Project Alternative, which includes the following features:

- Reduces the maximum annual production of the quarry by 50 percent, from 500,000 tons per year to 250,000 tons.
- Eliminates the recycling component of the project. The November 2014 Final EIR assumed this component of the project would involve accepting 1,500 tons of material for recycling daily.
- As a result of reducing production by 50 percent and eliminating recycling, truck trips would be reduced by 64 percent from 137 average daily round trips to 50 average daily round trips.
- Reduces the maximum daily number of round-trip truck trips from 400 to 135.
- Reduces blasting to 12 times per year, compared to 20 times per year under the proposed project.
- Includes mitigation to provide for a crossing guard at the Santa Margarita Elementary School at the Applicant's expense.
- Proposes two options for truck routes:
 - Option A: Trucks would have the ability to access and exit the quarry on El Camino Real through downtown Santa Margarita. This is the route that was evaluated in the November 2014 Final EIR for the proposed project; or
 - Option B: Requires that all truck trips (except for trucks that originate in Santa Margarita) reach to and from the quarry using El Camino Real from the north of town to access Estrada Road / Highway 58. All trucks leaving the quarry loaded with product that are headed to Highway 101 would be required to use Santa Barbara Road to access Highway 101, regardless of whether they are headed north or south on Highway 101 from that point.

SCOPE OF REVISED EIR: The County will use the November 2014 Final EIR, where applicable, to prepare a Revised Draft EIR and evaluate a Reduced Project Alternative. This scope represents the Department's best approximation of the work that will be necessary to update the previous EIR and evaluate the new alternative consistent with the requirements of CEQA. These tasks may be expanded or revised based on responses to the NOP and feedback received at the scoping meeting. Consultants may suggest changes or additions to the following scope of work in order to ensure preparation of an adequate and legally defensible EIR.

A. Use November 2014 Final EIR, where applicable, to prepare a Revised Draft EIR

- Make necessary changes to achieve compliance with any subsequent updates or changes to CEQA statues and guidelines, including, but not limited to, the requirements of AB 52 and SB 743.
- In each topic area, update the environmental setting/baseline sections, as necessary, to reflect current physical environmental conditions and the current regulatory framework. This may include, but not be limited to, updated technical studies such as biological/botanical survey.
- Prepare a new traffic study and revise the transportation and circulation section of the EIR. The new traffic study will incorporate updated traffic counts that were recently collected by the

Applicant's traffic consultant, Pinnacle Traffic Engineering, and will evaluate trip generation/distribution based on current and projected market conditions. The updated traffic counts are available at this link:

<http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/Assets/PL/RFP/2017+Existing+Conditions+and+Count+Data.pdf>

- Update other environmental topic areas, such as noise, greenhouse gas emissions, and air quality, to reflect the updated traffic analysis.
- Update the executive summary, introduction, alternatives, and other sections as necessary to describe the Reduced Project Alternative.
- Prepare a matrix, chart, or table that summarizes all of the changes to the November 2014 Final EIR.

B. Evaluate Reduced Project Alternative

- Conduct “project-level” / quantitative analysis of the Reduced Project Alternative’s impacts in the areas of traffic, noise, air quality, and greenhouse gas emissions. The traffic analysis will be based on the recent traffic counts and updated market demand assumptions, consistent with the updated traffic study that will be prepared for the Revised Final EIR.
- For other topic areas, the impact analysis will be prepared consistent with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(d), which states “The EIR shall include sufficient information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project.”

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW SUMMARY: The required EIR will include evaluation of project and cumulative impacts, mitigation measures and project alternatives.

A Final EIR for an identical project on the same site was published in November 2014. The County will use the November 2014 Final EIR to prepare a Revised Draft EIR for the proposed project. While the November 2014 Final EIR will be updated to reflect current baseline conditions, recent changes to CEQA statues and guidelines, and respond to scoping and NOP comments, it describes the probable environmental effects of the proposed project.

The November 2014 Final EIR concluded the proposed project would result in significant and unavoidable impacts in the areas of: noise, visual resources, and traffic.

The November 2014 Final EIR, and related documents, for the Las Pilitas Quarry are available online at the following link:

http://www.slocounty.ca.gov/planning/environmental/EnvironmentalNotices/Oster_Las_Pilitas_Quarry.htm