

County of Santa Clara
Department of Planning and Development
County Government Center, East Wing
70 West Hedding Street, 7th Floor
San Jose, California 95110

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TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS



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**NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
RECLAMATION PLAN AMENDMENT (CONSOLIDATED) FOR PERMANENTE QUARRY
(STATE MINE ID# 91-43-004)**

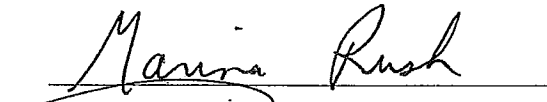
County File Number: 2250-13-66-10P(M1)-10EIR(M1)
Property Owner: Hanson Permanente Cement, Incorporated; Mine Operator: Lehigh Cement
Company/Heidelberg Cement Group (collectively Lehigh).
Assessors Parcel Numbers: 351-09-023, -013, -020, -025 -022; 351-10-005, -033, -037, -038; and
351-11-001.

As the Lead Agency, the County of Santa Clara (County) will prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for a proposed amendment to the existing 1985 Reclamation Plan for the Permanente Quarry. The Quarry is operated by Lehigh, and is a limestone and aggregate mining operation located in the western foothills of the County, approximately one half mile west of the City of Cupertino. The proposed application, received July 29, 2011, supersedes both the prior East Materials Storage Area Reclamation Plan Amendment (2009) and Comprehensive Reclamation Plan Amendment (2010) applications. The proposed reclamation area is approximately 811 acres and encompasses all portions of the property that have been disturbed by mining related operations. The application does not propose a new mining area. Please view the complete application materials and general information regarding Lehigh on the County website at: www.sccplanning.org.

The County would like your views regarding the scope and content of the environmental information to be included in the EIR. A Public Scoping Session to solicit comments for the Notice of Preparation will be held in the City of Cupertino on **Tuesday, August 30, 2011, 7:00 PM** at the City of Cupertino Quinlan Center, Cupertino Room, 10185 North Stelling Road, Cupertino, California 95014. In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), **comments on the Notice of Preparation are due to the County Planning Office by September 26, 2011, 5:00 PM.**

In order to efficiently process comments and inquires, please send emails regarding the NOP or other CEQA related issues to: permanentequarry@pln.sccgov.org, and for general inquires and SMARA related issues, please contact Gary Rudholm at: (408)299-5747 gary.rudholm@pln.sccgov.org. Written comments should be mailed to: **County of Santa Clara Planning Office, Att: Marina Rush, 70 West Hedding, 7th Floor, East Wing, San Jose CA 95110.**

Prepared by:
Marina Rush, Planner III



8-18-11

Approved by:
Rob Eastwood, Senior Planner



8-18-11

INTRODUCTION

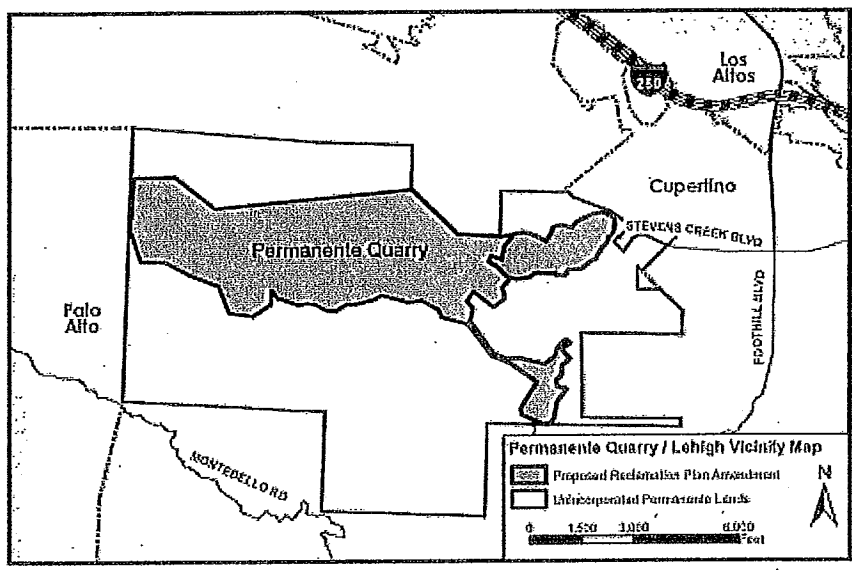
The purpose of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is to inform decision-makers and the general public of the environmental effects of a proposed project that an agency may implement or approve. The EIR process is intended to provide information sufficient to (a) evaluate a proposed project and its potential for significant impacts on the environment, (b) to examine methods of reducing adverse impacts; and (c) to consider alternatives to the project.

The EIR for the Comprehensive Reclamation Plan Amendment and Conditional Use Permit will be prepared and processed in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) of 1970, as amended. In accordance with CEQA, the EIR will include the following:

- A summary of the project
- A project description;
- A description of the existing environmental setting, potential environmental impacts, and mitigation measures;
- Cumulative impacts;
- Alternatives to the proposed project; and
- CEQA required environmental consequences, including (a) any significant environmental effects which cannot be avoided if the project is implemented; (b) any significant irreversible and irretrievable commitments of resources; (c) the growth inducing impacts of the proposed project; and (d) effects found not to be significant.

PROJECT LOCATION

The project is located in the unincorporated area of the western foothills of Santa Clara County, near the City of Cupertino, approximately two miles west of the intersection of Interstate 280 and Highway 85, at 24001 Stevens Creek Boulevard. Quarry access is via Stevens Creek Boulevard and Foothill Expressway, continuing to the terminus of Permanente Road. The proposed reclamation project area encompasses all mining areas, including the East Materials Storage Area, West Materials Storage Area, main mining pit, and rock crushing facility. The cement plant is a separate industrial use authorized under a use permit (No. 173.23), and is not located within the boundary of the existing or proposed reclamation plan area.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Lehigh is proposing to amend the existing Permanente Quarry 1985 Reclamation Plan. Mining at the Quarry is subject to the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act, which requires mining operations to have a lead-agency approved reclamation plan. The County of Santa Clara County will serve both as the Lead Agency under SMARA, and also the Lead Agency responsible for administering the environmental review for the proposed Project. Existing operations at the Quarry include mining of limestone and other raw materials, and processing of these materials for use in producing aggregate rock products and in cement manufacturing at the Cement Plant, which is located on an adjoining site. Mining activities have taken place at the Quarry since approximately 1903, and the Quarry and Cement Plant have been in continuous operation since the 1939.

According to the submitted reclamation plan application, mining operations at the quarry will continue for approximately 14 years, and is dependant on market conditions for material. Reclamation of the main mining pit will be accomplished by backfilling with material currently stored in the West Materials Storage Area (WMSA), and will have final elevations between 990 and 1,750 feet mean sea level (msl) with slopes at a maximum 2.5H:1.0V. The WMSA will be reduced to a lower elevation, and during the overburden relocation process, limestone and aggregate may be screened out for processing. Final slope angles in the WMSA will reach a maximum 2.5H:1.0V. The East Material Storage Area (EMSA) will remain as a permanent overburden storage site with slopes at a maximum 2.6H:1.0V. Reclamation consists of grading slopes to final contours, applying growth medium, reseeding and replanting activities, and maintenance and monitoring of all disturbed areas. It is also includes removing and dismantling the rock crusher, surge pile, and rock plant.

The EIR will provide a project-level evaluation of the potential environmental impacts caused by the implementation of project though approval of the proposed Comprehensive Reclamation Plan Amendment. Practical mitigation measures will be developed and presented for all direct, indirect and cumulative impacts that are found to be potentially significant. The following describes the environmental aspects of the project, and how they are potentially affected.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF THE PROJECT

The EIR will identify the significant environmental effects anticipated to result from implementation of the proposed project. Specific environmental topics addressed will include:

A. Visual Resources

The project site is located in a Zoning District with a Design Review overlay for the Santa Clara Valley Viewshed (d1). Much of the proposed project area is considered visible from the Santa Clara valley floor. The EIR will describe the anticipated changes to the visual environment as a result of the proposed mining and reclamation activities, including ultimate completion of the landscape and final design of the reclamation area, assessing any potentially significant aesthetic impacts. Visual simulations of the project site will be prepared. The County is requesting public feedback regarding suggested viewpoints to be used in the EIR for the visual impact analysis.

B. Biological Resources

Permanente Creek runs adjacent to the project site. The EIR will describe impacts to biological resources that are anticipated to occur as a result of the proposed project, including indirect impacts associated with any identified water quality impacts. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

C. Cultural Resources

The EIR will present findings of a cultural resources evaluation that will identify and describe how the proposed project would impact cultural resources (both historical and prehistorical). Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

D. Geology & Soils

Geologic and slope stability analysis for the project has been submitted by Lehigh. The EIR will describe

geology and soil conditions of the site and potential for the proposed mining and reclamation activities to cause increased slope instability or erosion potential, and include a peer review of the submitted geology reports. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

E. Surface Hydrology, Drainage & Water Quality

Permanente Creek runs adjacent to the project, and is on the State of California 303d list for selenium impairment. The EIR will describe hydrology and storm water quality impacts from the mining and reclamation process, and mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted. The EIR will evaluate the potential for the project to result in impacts to water quality, groundwater, and the hydrograph of Permanente creek.

G. Public Services

The EIR will describe the availability of services to serve the project site and identify, at a programmatic level, potential utilities and services impacts from the project. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

H. Noise and Vibration

The EIR will characterize ambient noise conditions in the vicinity of the project site and evaluate noise and vibration impacts from the proposed mining and reclamation activities with the County General Plan and Noise Ordinance standards. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

I. Land Use

Proposed mining activities in the quarry pit and final use, appearance and stability of the reclamation area will be examined to assess whether these activities would conflict with any County General Plan Policies or Zoning Ordinances.

J. Air Quality

Impacts of the proposed project on local air quality and sensitive receptors will be evaluated with emphasis on dust generation and emissions related to mining and reclamation activities. Air Quality analysis will include a health hazards risk assessment to nearby sensitive receptors. The EIR will not evaluate emissions related to existing cement plant operations. Mitigation measures will be identified for significant impacts, as warranted.

K. Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The EIR will address the potential impact of the project on global climate change. It will include the most recent information regarding the current understanding of the mechanisms behind global climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, current conditions and trends, while also incorporating the Bay Area Air Quality Management District CEQA thresholds for greenhouse gas emissions.

L. Alternatives

The EIR will describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project, including a Reduced Project Alternative and a No Project Alternative.

M. Growth Inducing Impacts

The EIR will discuss methods by which the proposed project will directly or indirectly induce economic, population, or housing growth.

N. Cumulative Impacts

The EIR will include a Cumulative Impacts section which will address the potential significant or irreversible cumulative impacts of the proposed mining and reclamation activities under the Reclamation Plan Amendment when considered with past, present, and probable future projects producing related or cumulative impacts, or projections contained in applicable land use documents of regional or area-wide conditions contributing to the cumulative impact.