

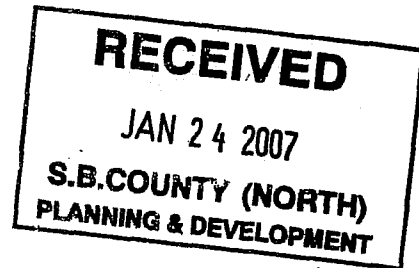


Ojai Unified School District

414 East Ojai Avenue, P.O. Box 878, Ojai, CA 93024
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January 22, 2007

Gary Kaiser
624 W. Foster Road
Santa Maria, CA 93455



Dear Mr. Kaiser:

Last Tuesday evening, the Governing Board of the Ojai Unified School District voted 5-0 to oppose the Troesh Ready-Mix proposal before the Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors. The concerns stated by our School Board when discussing this issue relate to safety of our students coming to and from school, increased vehicle traffic noise around our schools, and increased air pollution throughout the Ojai Valley.

It is possible that the Santa Barbara Board of Supervisors is not aware of the heavy rock truck traffic that we already experience on our small two-lane roads. I am attaching a mine and truck use chart that our staff compiled for the Board. I believe that we are the first agency to look at the entire scope of this problem. As you can see from our compiled information, we already have a number of trucks using these roads. With the allowance of the Diamond Rock trucks, we will have close to 400 trips per day (379 trips for Mosler, Ozena, GPS, and Diamond Rock combined added to the undisclosed Lima-Gypsum and Clay Mines trips) allowed to drive past Mira Monte Elementary School and Nordhoff High School. If all of these trucks were lined up end-to-end they would stretch over five miles or all the way from Ojai to Oak View. The addition of the 164 allowable trips for this proposal will have a huge impact on the environment of the Ojai Valley.

It is student safety that is our biggest concern. Mira Monte Elementary School adjoins Highway 33 where all of the truck traffic will be. We have students as young as five who have to cross this street to get to school. The drive past Nordhoff High School is particularly frightening considering that the road the trucks will be traveling on is the only entrance and exit from the campus. We have hundreds of cars (most driven by young people) and even more pedestrians on that street throughout the day. In addition, our PE classes and sports teams frequently have students running on these streets. Adding a possible 164 trucks to this mess is creating an unsafe situation by any definition.

Increased traffic noise also needs to be reviewed. The current EIR states that, *the proposed project would not result in any significant noise impacts. Hence no mitigation measures are required.* The report further states that only two houses are located within 100 feet along Highway 33 where the trucks will be driving. This is inaccurate. These trucks will pass many

Administration

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Jarice Butterfield, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent, Elementary Education and Student Services
Dannielle Pusatere, Assistant Superintendent Business and Administrative Services

Board of Education

Rikki Horne, President
Steve Fields, Vice President
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residences, businesses, and two Ojai Unified schools. The noise from these trucks will disturb the learning environment at both schools.

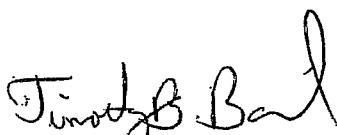
Another concern voiced by our Board concerns the increased air pollution that these trucks will bring into our Valley. The EIR does not address the increase in air pollution in the Ojai Valley caused by this project except to propose some wishful thinking that emissions standards may get more stringent and that the use of this mine might reduce the truck traffic going to other mines. Neither of these assumptions are based upon current facts and the reality is that our air quality will be impacted negatively by this project. It is ironic that as our District moves to address student wellness issues and take a proactive stand against student obesity, we may actually be forced to curtail student physical activity so as not to expose them to the increased dangerous pollutants that will be in our air because of this project.

One strategy that has been suggested in the EIR and implemented in the past relating to truck traffic has been to put restrictions on times that trucks may travel. The argument is that if we restrict truck traffic from heavy traffic times we can then mitigate the safety issue and the increased traffic issue. Indeed, Diamond Rock has voluntarily agreed to not go southbound during morning commute times or northbound during evening commute times. There are many flaws in this solution. The first glaring omission is that nothing prevents northbound morning truck traffic or southbound afternoon truck traffic around our schools. It is widely known in our Valley that at these times there is a serious traffic and safety problem on Highway 33 in **both directions**. I would also like to point out that our schools are used after school and on weekends by community groups, sports teams, and youth. Who will protect these young people from heavy truck traffic then? The biggest flaw with this argument is that this restriction is unenforceable. In a recent conversation with Chief Norris of the Ojai Police, he shared with me that with all of the different regulations that each company has now and our limited police manpower, it is impossible to enforce even the current restrictions that are in place. Adding more trucks will make that even harder. Time restrictions are not the solution here as they are already widely ignored.

Our Board understands that these mines and trucks serve an important role in our economy. We are not against their operation. The problem is that this particular road is over saturated with heavy trucks. The Ojai Valley is doing its share by allowing the numerous trucks that are already clogging our roads. To add more would be dangerous and unfair to our small community.

We believe that the EIR that has been done on this project is flawed and needs to be corrected. Obvious mistakes can be found throughout the report such as the statement, "*Although contracts awarded to the proposed Diamond Rock Mine would result in altered traffic patterns, they would not cause a net increase in overall aggregate-related traffic volumes in the region.*" How can the increase of this many trucks on our roads not cause an increase in traffic volume in the Ojai Valley? Please do not allow this increase in large rock trucks to jeopardize the safety and well being of the young people of the Ojai Valley.

Sincerely,


Timothy B. Baird
Superintendent
Attachment

Mines	County	# of Yrs Operation	Permit Expires	Average # of Trips	Max Trips	Trucking Hours	Days/wk	Restricted Hours	Other Information
Mosler Rock Quarry	Ventura	58	6/1/2015	40	40	6am - 7pm	M - Sat	M-F: 8am - 9am	No SR150
Ozena (expansion proposal)	Ventura	4	2011	66	100	3am - 5pm	M - Sat	M-F: 6:30am - 9am M-F (NB): 3:30pm - 6:30pm NHS (NB/SB): 2:30pm - 3:15pm	No staging on Hwy 33
GPS (expansion proposal)	SB	20	10 yrs???	55	75	Awaiting Information (add'l 17 years under other ownership)			
Diamond Rock (new mine proposal)	SB	0	app	118	164	24 hours	7 days/wk	M-Sat (SB): 6:30am - 9am M-Sat (NB): 3:30pm - 6pm NHS: 7am - 8am & 2:30pm - 3:15pm	No staging on Hwy 33 No caravans Headlights on State Hwys
Totals				<u>279</u>	<u>379</u>				

Other: In my research 2 other mines (Lima-Gypsum & Clay Mine) are operating, but I was told they "**mostly**" travel northbound.

Note: Information compiled from various sources such as Ventura & SB planning departments and the City of Ojai.