



A Tradition of Stewardship  
A Commitment to Service

Agenda Date: 10/2/2013

Agenda Placement: 9A

## Napa County Planning Commission Board Agenda Letter

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**TO:** Napa County Planning Commission

**FROM:** Charlene Gallina for Gitelman, Hillary - Director  
Planning, Building and Environmental Services

**REPORT BY:** DONALD BARRELLA, PLANNER III - 707-299-1338

**SUBJECT:** Syar Napa Quarry EIR Public Hearing

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

**SYAR NAPA QUARRY EXPANSION AND SURFACE MINING PERMIT PROJECT (P08-00337-SMP)  
PUBLIC HEARING ON THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
APNs: 045-360-005, 046-370-012, -013, -015, -022, -025, 046-390-002, -003, and 045-450-071.**

### **CEQA Status:**

Napa County has completed a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) analyzing the potential environmental impacts of the Syar Napa Quarry Expansion Project. The DEIR was released for public review and agency review and comment beginning September 6, 2013. The public comment period is scheduled to end at the close of business (4:45 p.m.) on October 21, 2013. Interested agencies, organizations, and members of the public are encouraged to submit written comments to planning staff prior to that date. Oral or written comments may also be submitted to the Planning Commission during this agendaized hearing or at another hearing scheduled for this purpose on October 2, 2013 (tonight) at 5:30 p.m. at the Napa County Main Library (580 Coombs Street) in the Community Meeting Room.

### **Request:**

This is a public hearing to receive comments regarding the DEIR that has been prepared to analyze potential direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts as a result of the proposed project. The purpose of the project is to provide for an approximate 124-acre expansion of the surface mining operation and associated mining and reclamation plan associated with aggregate processing, production and sales currently permitted by UP-128182, UP-27374, and the approved reclamation plan (Napa County Agreement 2225).

The project would expand the existing 497-acre surface mine and allow mining to continue for a 35 year term, including an increase in depth from approximately 300 feet and 150 feet above mean sea level (msl) to no greater than 50 feet above msl, and an increase in production from approximately 1 million tons per year to 2 million tons per year. Other activities associated with the proposed project include the relocation and improvement of portions of Skyline Trail, that were originally constructed on the quarry property, back onto Skyline Wilderness

Park lands.

**Staff Recommendation:** Receive public comments on the DEIR. No action is requested.

**Staff Contact:** Donald Barrella, 707-299-1338 or [donald.barrella@countyofnapa.org](mailto:donald.barrella@countyofnapa.org)

### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Napa County planning staff has worked with the environmental consulting firm of Winzler and Kelly (now GHD) to prepare the DEIR for the Syar Napa Quarry Expansion Project. The DEIR has been prepared and is being circulated for public and agency review and comment pursuant to the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the State CEQA Guidelines, and Napa County's local procedures for implementing CEQA. A summary of the project's impacts and mitigation measures have been included as an attachment to this report. During the public review and comment period, members of the public are invited to submit written or e-mail comments to County planning staff, or may comment orally at one of the scheduled public hearings on the DEIR. All substantive comments on the DEIR must be responded to in a Final EIR. The Final EIR must be completed and certified by the Planning Commission before a decision can be made on the proposed project. Subsequent to the hearings on the DEIR, the Planning Commission will hold duly noticed public hearing(s), pursuant to Code Section 18.136.040, to consider the adequacy of the Final EIR and the merits of the proposed project prior to taking action on #P08-00337-SMP, pursuant to Napa County's Surface Mining and Reclamation ordinance (Napa County Code Chapter 16.12 - Surface Mining and Reclamation) and the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act (SMARA) of 1975 (Public Resources Code Sections 2710-2796) and the SMARA Guidelines.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

Is there a Fiscal Impact?                      No

### **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINATION: Napa County has completed a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) analyzing the potential environmental impacts of the Syar Napa Quarry Expansion Project. The DEIR was released for public review and agency review and comment beginning September 6, 2013. The public comment period is scheduled to end at the close of business (4:45 p.m.) on October 21, 2013. Interested agencies, organizations, and members of the public are encouraged to submit written comments to planning staff prior to that date. Oral or written comments may also be submitted to the Planning Commission during this agendaized hearing or at another hearing scheduled for this purpose on October 2, 2013 (tonight) at 5:30 PM at the Napa County Main Library (580 Coombs Street) in the Community Meeting Room.

### **BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION**

#### **Quarry Background**

The Syar Napa Quarry is the largest quarry in Napa County, being both the largest in acreage and in volume of material produced and sold. Mining activities have taken place on the site for over a century. When first opened in the early 1900s, it was called the Basalt Rock Quarry. The Basalt Rock Company acquired the original property in

1924 and continued to mine aggregate materials through most of the twentieth century. In 1961, the Basalt Rock Company leased a 182-acre parcel adjoining the project site to the north from the State of California. Syar Industries Incorporated purchased the quarry property in 1986 and has been actively mining the site since that time. In the 1990's, Syar purchased a one-half interest in the 121-acre Pasini property, an area located adjacent to the eastern portion of the quarry. In 1998, Syar purchased the 182 acres that were previously leased from the State of California in the northern portion of the site.

On November 28, 1973, the Napa County Board of Supervisors approved UP-27374 for the Syar Napa Quarry to bring existing and future quarry operations at the site into compliance with the Napa County Zoning Ordinance #168. The permit included all of the properties owned and leased by the Basalt Rock Company. On September 22, 1981, the Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to the permit (UP-128182) to allow the operator to mine the upper reaches of the State Grey Pit in a more efficient manner. A Reclamation Plan was developed for the Syar Napa Quarry and submitted by Basalt Rock Company to the County. The Reclamation Plan was approved by the County on December 14, 1984 (Napa County Agreement #2225). The County determined that the Syar Napa Quarry was consistent with County Ordinance No. 693 implementing SMARA. A specified end date or commencement of reclamation is not identified under these current entitlements.

The primary commercial aggregates at the Syar Napa Quarry are blue basalt, rhyolite, and tuff. Blue basalt has a high market value because of its weight, strength and durability. This material is used for a number of industry and heavy construction applications, such as concrete and asphalt products. A very high quality rhyolite is found throughout the Syar Napa Quarry and is sold as rip rap, landscape boulders, construction aggregates, drain rock and other uses. A third aggregate type found at the site is tuff, which can be used as engineered fill and for similar uses. A wide variety of non-commercial aggregates, such as scoria, found in the quarry would remain onsite and be used for reclamation.

### **Quarry Designations**

The Syar Napa Quarry was designated by the state as a Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ-2(a)) in 1987, identifying the quarry site as a known mineral resource of regional and economic significance. A large portion of the Quarry is also covered by a Mineral Resource (MR) overlay in the Napa County General Plan.

### **Project Objectives**

The applicant has identified the following objectives for the project:

#### Primary Project Objectives:

To continue and extend operation of the existing Syar Napa Quarry for 35 years, thereby providing a local, reliable, affordable, and consistent source of aggregate and aggregate-related materials to customers in the Napa Region.

To expand the surface mining and reclamation plan by approximately 124-acres to allow for mining access to a reliable, affordable, and consistent source of aggregate and aggregate-related materials to customers in the Napa Region.

To increase the annual permitted saleable quantity of aggregate and aggregate related materials from currently one million tons to two million tons.

#### Supporting Project Objectives:

To increase production of high quality aggregate and aggregate products in conformance with state and local goals and objectives, including the Napa County General Plan (which designates the site as Mineral Resource

(MR)) and the policies of the State Mining and Geology Board (which has designated the site as a resource of regional significance).

To extend the life of the existing quarry to meet long-term local needs for aggregate materials in the Napa region through continued and expanded operation of the existing facilities, including the rock processing plant, sand plant, two asphaltic concrete (AC) plants, and the aggregate base (AB)/recycling plant.

To extend the life of the existing quarry and in so doing aid implementation of state and local goals to reduce the loss of high quality productive agricultural land as well as minimize greenhouse gas emissions and fossil fuel use by providing a local aggregate resource.

To help fulfill California's need to permit additional aggregate resources to meet current and expected demand for public and private infrastructure improvements;

To utilize Reclaimed Asphalt Pavement (RAP) handling equipment at the Syar Napa Quarry and in so doing aid implementation of state and local goals to facilitate local production and reuse of high quality aggregate products.

To improve and refine commitments for surface mine reclamation during and after active mining.

To relocate sections of the existing Skyline Wilderness Park trail currently located on the project site so that it is permanently accessible to the public by returning it to land within Skyline Wilderness Park.

To update the Reclamation Plan which will be more effective and use native species.

### **Project Location**

The Syar Napa Quarry project site is located on the east side of State Highway 221 (Napa-Vallejo Highway) at its intersection with Basalt Road (Assessor's Parcel Number's: 045-360-005, 046-370-012, 046-370-013, 046-370-015, 046-370-022, 046-370-025, 046-390-002, 046-390-003, and 046-450-071).

### **Project Characteristics**

The project would expand the existing 497-acre Syar Napa Quarry and allow mining to continue for a 35 year term, including an increase in the mining depth from between approximately 300 feet and 150 feet above mean sea level to no greater than 50 feet above mean sea level, and an increase in sales of aggregate and aggregate related materials from current levels of approximately 1 million tons per year up to approximately 2 million tons per year. Other activities associated with the proposed project include the relocation and improvement of two Skyline Wilderness Park's trails (Buckeye Trail and Skyline Trail), that were originally constructed on the quarry property, back onto Skyline Park lands.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS**

A . Draft EIR Executive Summary of Impacts and Mitigation

B . Syar Napa Quarry Site Location and Project Maps

Napa County Planning Commission: Approve

Reviewed By: John McDowell