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March 4, 2008

Mr. Steve Padovan, Staff
Sonoma County PRMD
2550 Ventura Ave.
Santa Rosa, Ca 95403

Re: Comments on Dutra DEIR
File# PLP04-0046

Dear Mr. Padovan:

I am submitting the following comments on the Dutra DEIR. They focus on Chapter V.J.- Transportation and Traffic. The document in several instances refers to practices and standards which have emanated from recent Board of Supervisors actions on quarry use permits. I have made comment on those assertions in the DIER.

As a member of the local CMAC committee (local aggregate producers) I am particularly interested in the environmental review of aggregate and aggregate related use permits. I am especially interested in the environmental review issues surrounding matters of transportation and traffic.

B16-1

Cordially,

Nick Tibbetts, Consultant

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COMMENTS ON THE DEIR ANALYSIS OF TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

1. On page VJ-2 traffic observations were made on northbound Petaluma Blvd South which indicated that 11% of the total traffic consisted of heavy trucks or busses. Does the 11% reflect the actual count of vehicles or does it reflect a number based on a conversion to Passenger Car Equivalents (PCE)? B16-2

2. In Figure VJ-1 the existing turning movement traffic exiting north off Highway101shows a count of 204 vehicles. How many of the 204 are large busses and trucks? Are the numbers representing trucks and busses converted to PCE's? Are the numbers of vehicles (trucks) coming out of Landing Way converted to PCE's? B16-3

3. In Figs. V6 & V7. Does the vehicle number 225 represent a PCE converted number (3) of vehicles (trucks) exiting the Dutra Project site? B16-4

4. In traffic studies there exists an assumed percentage number representing large truck and bus numbers as a % proportion of any highway traffic number. The most recent % was 7%. However in the traffic numbers referred to above that number was 11%. Which ever % number representing background traffic in this DEIR should convert the large truck and bus % number into a PCE at a factor of three (3). The background traffic (including Landing Way), like the project traffic, should reflect the PCE numbers. B16-5

New Truck Traffic Assumptions---pages VJ-16 &17:

5. The analysis walks the reader through the process of how the peak hour of truck traffic is determined. The analysis is fine until the sentence which states "...truck traffic is then adjusted to include a seasonal peaking factor. Based on previous studies, the County has set the factor at three (3.0)." The analysis goes on to state that the adjustment "results in the average peak daily traffic."

Is the reference to the recent Canyon Rock and Blue Rock Quarry projects? If not, to which projects? If yes, the statement is in error. In the case of Canyon Rock the traffic study identified a peak month, a peak week, a peak day, and a peak hour (a.m). That process determined the peak hour for intersection analysis. The staff carried it further by assuming occasionally there would be unusually large projects which would boost the peak output beyond the traditional identification of the peak hour. Even with all that, the increase over the base case (existing project peak) was not a factor of three, but at the most two (2). B16-6

6. On page VJ-17 it is stated that each truck trip is reported as three passenger car equivalents. Then the next sentence notes "that exhibits in the study reflect trips in terms of actual vehicles and not passenger car equivalents (PCE)." Do these sentences represent a contradiction? When in the traffic evaluation process do you report vehicles as trucks and trucks as PCE's? When determining the peak hour and the "seasonal peaking" factor, don't the analyses usually use the actual numbers of vehicles and not the PCE's? Isn't it more appropriate to have PCE's come into play when charting turning movements at intersections so that impact comparisons can be done on an "apples to apples" basis? B16-7

7. On page VJ-19 it is stated that the Project Description indicates that material importation is by barge and 23 ton trucks. It goes on to state that product exportation uses an average of 12 tons per truck. Where did the 12 ton figure come from? Did the June 2004 traffic study conclude that? Did that traffic study do actual counts at the temporary facility? If 12 tons is the number for the exporting trucks, the PCE should change from 3 cars to 1.5 cars when reporting on trucks exporting material from the site. B16-8

ARM Plan Fee:

8. On page VJ-17 the DEIR concludes that based upon its analysis, the Dutra project is subject to an "assessment of an aggregate fee consistent with Sonoma County's Aggregate Resource Management (ARM) Plan..." It goes on to state that the applicant would be required to pay the ARM fee on the basis of the increment of new truck traffic generated by this project." B16-9

That statement has no basis in fact. The ARM Plan is a regulatory document which applies to the mining of aggregate in Sonoma County. Its requirements do not apply to asphalt or concrete plants or raw materials imported into the county. What is the

justification for attempting to bring the Dutra asphalt and aggregate sales project uner the jurisdiction of the ARM Plan? B16-9

9. Is the ARM Plan fee referred to above the ARM Plan Mitigation Fund Fee adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1995? If yes, has any aggregate mining operation in Sonoma County been assessed a fee under this Fund? Has any asphalt plant or concrete plant located in Sonoma County which uses aggregate ever been assessed a fee under this Fund? Given the non applicability of the ARM Plan fee to this project, page VJ-21 is not relevant to the DEIR's analysis. B16-10

HIGHWAY IMPACTS

10. On page VJ-28 the DEIR concludes that "the project would add traffic to ramp movements and to Highway 101 mainline in both directions." The project would result in a significant impact to Highway 101 southbound traffic at the a.m. peak hour and a significant impact to the southbound 101 ramp at the a.m. peak hour.

The DEIR's proposed mitigation for the project is to require a fair share contribution towards the planned construction of a HOV lane. The project's fair share would be computed as proportion of total near term cumulative traffic. The project is also required to fund a fair share contribution towards any planned interchange improvements for the Hwy 101/Petaluma Blvd South interchange project. This fair share is calculated as the project share of the total peak hour traffic on the northbound and southbound ramps. B16-11

The applicant objects to the mitigation insofar as it is a state highway project which is expected to receive programmed federal and state dollars augmented by voter approved local dollars. Have any other projects in the vicinity, approved in the last five (5) years, been required to make similar such contributions?

11. If a fair share contribution is to be required as part of the EIR, the county should provide the applicant as part of this proces: 1) a defined and designed public project or projects in which the applicant is expected to financially participate; 2) a financial contribution in a dollar denomination that is justifiably proportional to the project's traffic impacts; 3) a fair share formula which clearly explains step be step the rationale for the financial contribution that the project is expected to make. B16-12

TABLE VJ-11 (NEW PROJECT TRIP GENERATION)

12. Table VJ-11 represents new project trip generation numbers. It is the basis for determining the fair share calculation for potential project funding contributions to the future Hwy 101 widening (HOV lanes) in the project vicinity. It is also the basis for funding contributions for a possible new interchange in the vicinity as part of the highway widening project.

It is critical to accurately determine the a.m. peak hour traffic contribution by the project. That number is key to determining the "fair share" contribution. It is difficult to determine that number without agreement as to the existing project a.m. peak hour traffic. It is also difficult to determine the "fair share" funding contribution without agreement on the a.m. peak hour project traffic at the new site.

B16-13

In Table VJ-11 the DEIR traffic analysis attempts to generate an answer to the second part of the above two requirements—new site a.m. peak hour traffic. The DEIR begins by determining that an annual daily average of truck trips is 250 trucks in and 250 trucks out for a total 500. The DEIR adjusts the number seeking a seasonal peaking factor of 3x. As a result the new number is 750 trucks in and 750 trucks out in a 10 hour day. That is then translated into an a.m. peak hour of 75 trucks in and 75 trucks out. What is the justification for the seasonal peaking factor of 3x? Specifically where did it come from and how was it calculated in that case?

13. Then for purposes of comparing apples with apples, the trucks are converted to passenger car equivalents (PCE) by multiplying the above 75 per hour x 3. This generates a number of 225 and 225. If project exporting trucks carry 12 tons instead of 23 tons of material exiting the site, should not the PCE be reduced proportionally (by ½) to 1.5?

B16-14

14. The proposed a.m. peak hour of 75 trucks would mean that at 12 tons per truck 900 tons of material would go out the gate. The DEIR notes that the asphalt plant has a maximum 400 ton per hour production capacity. If so, that leaves 500 tons of raw sand and or aggregate going out the gate in that same a.m. peak hour. One needs to keep in mind that as these 75 fully loaded trucks exit the project site for Petaluma Blvd. South there will be 75 empty trucks entering the project site preparing to become loaded.

B16-15

This raises an empirical question. Given the site configuration (Fig. VJ-4) and the simultaneous production processes, can 75 fully loaded trucks: enter the site; queue up for asphalt and aggregate; become loaded; weighed and exit out to Petaluma Blvd and enter the roadway within 60 minutes? If the number of trucks were 60, then that would mean every minute a truck would pass through the cycle. Perhaps two minutes if the aggregate and asphalt production processes were sufficiently separated. At 75 trucks the time would be less than one minute per truck.

The empirical question extends to this: How long does it take for an asphalt truck to enter the site, load up and leave the site? How long does it take for an aggregate truck to enter the site, load up and leave? For the purposes of the exercise assume as the DEIR does that the "exporting trucks" carry 12 tons.

The above empirical analysis assumes the inputs as provided in the DEIR. Those of course are no doubt problematical. The analysis assumes that exported product exits in a 12 ton truck. How was the figure of 12 tons determined? Why wasn't the figure 23 tons (similar to the size of the importing trucks)? Is it reasonable to assume that the exporting truck equivalent load is somewhere between 12 and 23-25 tons?

B16-15 (cont'd)

Note that if it is to be a 12 ton truck, then the PCE the conversion factor should be reduced to 1.5 from the DEIR's three (3). The reduced conversion factor is warranted because three (3) assumes a 23-25 ton quarry truck. The PCE conversion for a 12 ton truck should be ½ of 3 or 1.5.

Additionally, the DEIR early in the peak hour calculation process adjusts the daily trips by adding a peaking factor of 3 times. This is subjective and not supported in other recent quarry use permits. If, for the sake of argument, the peaking factor was two (2) times instead of three (3), the 75 trucks would become 50 trucks. The above empirical questions, however, would still apply to the 50 trucks.

15. Historically use permits that were to be extended or expanded conducted traffic studies relying on traffic counts. This approach created a basis for empirically determining what the peak hour traffic was or would be.

Peak hour traffic coming from a processing facility is influenced as much by the process of putting the product out onto the roadway in a given time (one hour for example), as it is by the potential volume of material available to the operator. It is not simply determined by a series of calculations predicated on annual production numbers.

Intersection analysis for example attempts to determine the volumes of the traffic at a given time at the intersection. Intersections are sized for capacity and peaks.

B16-16

Question: Is it not true that using the DEIR's analysis for intersection movements and subsequent improvements, that an asphalt operator who produces 250,000 tons annually may not generate more peak hour truck trips than a competitor across the street that produces 100,000 tons annually?

Baseline Peak Hour Traffic (Existing Temporary Facility)

The calculation of a baseline peak hour traffic number suffers on two counts. First, there is noticeable lack of clarity in the determination of the baseline peak hour. One simply can compare the full page TableVJ-11 on page VJ-20 with a brief description sans chart or Table found on the following page—VJ-21.

There is a declared baseline a.m. peak hour number of 130 a.m. peak hour traffic (trucks) (plus 10 for autos) = 140 a.m. peak. The path to that number comes without a descriptive critical path or chart. One can compare using an extrapolation with the number on Table VJ-11 on the previous page. The total a.m. peak hour traffic on Table VJ-11 appears to be 235 trips using the PCE conversion. It is not entirely clear, but it appears that the 140 a.m. peak hour number (Baseline Peak Hour) includes the PCE conversion.

B16-16 (cont'd)

16. Questions: A reasonable question to ask is: In the baseline analysis (existing temporary facility) was there a conversion factor of 3.0 in adjusting the daily trips as was done in Table VJ-11? Secondly, in the baseline analysis was the PCE conversion rate 3.0 or was it 1.5?

Did the baseline a.m. peak hour traffic include a boost in its number representing that larger than usual job which can ultimately generate twice as many a.m. peak hour truck trips as would normally be recorded using the "typical" a.m. peak hour numbers? It is a reasonable expectation because the boosted once in a year large job can occur today (baseline) just as likely as it is anticipated to happen in the project scenario. In that way comparing a.m. peaks hours between baseline numbers and future project numbers insures that the analysis is comparing "apples with apples."

B16-17

17. Figure VJ-7 on page VJ-23 shows the final existing plus project turning movements. This represents the "delta" or the increment between the baseline and the project conditions (VJ-23). The DEIR goes on to say that the peak hour baseline as represented by the observed driveway volumes "is assumed to be representative of the average asphalt production activity at the temporary site" (baseline site) VJ-23. This description cries out for an answer to the QUESTION: "what is the a. m. peak hour traffic number at the temporary site?" And further does it include the factors outlined in the paragraph above? The phrase "average asphalt production activity" strongly suggests that the answer is no—those factors were not considered in determining the baseline a.m. peak hour traffic. Additionally, the DEIR analysis on this page makes no mention of baseline traffic from the existing temporary site relative to off site sales of aggregate and sand. Does the existing baseline a.m. peak hour number reflect the sales of sand and aggregate from the site?

B16-18

18. Figure VJ-7 on page VJ-23. Do the background and cumulative traffic include the PCE conversion number? At Landing Way the a.m. peak hour export number is 17 vehicles (trucks) leaving the site exiting onto Petaluma Blvd South. If the PCE conversion factor were implemented, then that number would be approximately 51. In Dutra's project case the number is 225. It includes within that number the PCE conversion at the rate of 3x. That failure to convert at Landing Way suggests that the background through traffic on Petaluma Blvd South does not convert the large truck and bus traffic assumed to exist on the Blvd at the a.m. peak hour. If it did, it would increase the numbers of non Dutra project traffic at the intersections thereby reducing somewhat the relative impact of the Dutra project traffic at those intersections.

B16-19