

# New deal for Harris Quarry

Mike A'Dair, Willits News, 8-12-10

It's back to square one for the Harris Quarry Expansion Project.

Project applicant, Northern Aggregates, Inc. of Willits, has thrown in the towel on its plans to seek an end-of-life permit to mine gravel at the site just south of Ridgewood Summit. NA also has said "uncle" on plans to site a concrete plant on the northwest side of the hill at the summit.

Instead, the company wants to move forward with a scaled-down version of the quarry expansion and to site only the asphalt plant on the north face of the hill.

The Mendocino County Department of Planning and Building Services will prepare a revised draft environmental impact report on the smaller proposed project.

According to Adrienne Thompson, commission services supervisor for the county Planning Commission, the term of the requested use permit for the quarry is now 30 years instead of the previous "end-of-life" term; the concrete facility has been eliminated, and the project footprint has been reduced to reflect the proposal's smaller scope.

Northern Aggregates is seeking county approval of a use permit renewal and modification that would allow production of up to 150,000 tons of asphalt a year and nighttime operations for up to 100 nights per year.

They also are seeking a change to the county zoning ordinance to create a new category called a Mineral Processing Combining District. These districts would allow asphalt processing to occur in any quarry in the county that met the guidelines of the new district.

In addition, Northern Applicants is seeking county approval of a revised reclamation plan for Harris Quarry site.

Charles Martin, a spokesman for Keep The Code, a citizens group that opposed the earlier version of the Harris Quarry expansion, says his group also opposes the project as currently proposed.

"The concrete plant is gone, and that's good," Martin said. "But the asphalt plant would be an industrial facility in a forest area. They still want that zoning change. That could be a real disaster," he added.

A scoping meeting for the revised project EIR will be held from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., on Tuesday evening, August 17, at the Willits Community Center.

In addition, interested persons may submit written comments on the project to the Department of Planning and Building.

Comments may be emailed to [spekaj@co.mendocino.ca.us](mailto:spekaj@co.mendocino.ca.us), or mailed to John Speka, Department of Planning and Building Services, Mendocino County Administrative Center, 501 Low Gap Road, Ukiah, CA 95482.

Deadline for this round of comments is September 3.