

# Proposed quarry upsets Santa Margaritans

**Kathy Johnston, San Luis Obispo New Times, 7-15-10**

Residents of the Santa Margarita area turned out in force at a July 8 meeting to voice their fears about a proposed granite quarry east of town. Around 100 people showed up at a scoping meeting to tell county planners what issues should be covered in the environmental impact report for the proposed Las Pilitas Quarry in a rural residential area two miles southeast of Santa Margarita.

“This is the most well attended scoping meeting I’ve seen in my 10 years with the county, with the most well-informed comments,” said county planner Jeff Oliveira.

Locals are especially worried about the impacts of 400 72-foot double trucks entering and leaving the quarry each day, passing through Santa Margarita along the way.

“That’s one truck every three minutes, for the next 30 years,” one resident calculated.

“The road is insanely narrow and curvy. Many of us have met through accidents out there,” said another, as his neighbors laughed knowingly.

Las Pilitas Resources, LLC, is proposing to blast and excavate steep hillsides made of granite rock and decomposed granite, removing 500,000 tons of material each year. Plans also call for using the crushing equipment to process recycled asphalt and concrete debris that would be trucked to the site and stockpiled.

It would be the third granite quarry in the area, leading some residents to question the “environmental justice” of forcing one community to shoulder the burdens of all the mining.

The applicant’s agent, Ken Johnston, explained that the new quarry would “create some competition.”

Residents asked county planners to study the traffic and safety impacts, noise, visual impacts, devaluation of nearby property, fire danger, water use, and cultural impacts of the proposed quarry.

Comments will be accepted by the county until Aug. 3 and should be addressed to [joliveira@co.slo.ca.us](mailto:joliveira@co.slo.ca.us).