

# Landowner wants Temecula's annexation of land near quarry reconsidered

**Jeff Horseman and John F. Hill, Riverside Press-Enterprise, 7-23-10**

A man owning a slice of land set to be annexed by Temecula near the proposed Liberty Quarry has asked the commission that approved the city's plan to take a second look.

Developer Nelson Mamey said he owns 40 acres southwest of Temecula to be annexed by the city. In a letter to the Riverside Local Agency Formation Agency, Mamey said the move would hurt his chances to develop the property.

The annexation approved in June encompasses a 4,510-acre area. Most of the land is in the Santa Margarita Ecological Reserve, a wilderness research area run by San Diego State University.

The land is adjacent to the proposed site of Liberty Quarry, an open-pit mine opposed by council members and many residents. Last year, Temecula tried to annex the quarry site but the commission rejected the proposal, saying the county was the best forum to decide whether the quarry should be built.

The city revised its annexation request to exclude the quarry site. The commission approved that revised plan last month.

A member of the LAFCO's seven-member commission also has asked the agency to rethink its approval of the annexation.

Earlier this week, Phil Williams asked for the waiving of an \$875 fee required to challenge the annexation. On Thursday, Williams said he still wants the agency to rethink the annexation vote but he doesn't want taxpayers to foot the bill for "political bickering."

A formal request to review the annexation, along with the \$875 fee, must be received by Monday, LAFCO Executive Director George Spiliotis said.

Williams said he would wait to see if Mamey puts up the \$875 before deciding whether to pay it himself. Mamey could not be reached Thursday.

Williams, who also serves on the Elsinore Valley Municipal Water District board, said he was concerned by council members' comments at their July 13 meeting suggesting the city would create a master plan and trails for the rocky, hill-covered area.

That contradicts what city officials told the commission when they sought the annexation, Williams said. City leaders have stressed their desire to preserve the annexed area as open space.