

# Quarry plan scraps RV park

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*Wilder Ranch*  
By DONNA KIMURA

Sentinel staff writer

SANTA CRUZ — A proposal to reactivate the Wilder Quarry will be considered by the Santa Cruz County Planning Commission on Wednesday.

The sand quarry has been idle since 1990, but the Graniterock Co. of Watsonville hopes to reopen the operation.

The quarry is surrounded on three sides by Wilder Ranch State Park and is home to the threatened California red-legged frog.

The firm proposes mining about 200,000 tons of sand per year for 15 years, which is a 60 percent reduction from its past production, said Jim West, the company's director of governmental and community affairs.

The sand would be harvested from 20 acres of the company's 310-acre site.

Traffic concerns on busy Mission Street may be one of the biggest issues with the project.

Under the proposal, the firm would run about 36 trucks a day. Historically, 15 percent go north on Highway 1 and 85 percent south through Santa Cruz on Mission, West said.

There are already trucks on that road from other mining operations. The re-opening of the Wilder Quarry will have a net impact of about 25 more loads of sand on Mission because the company expects to replace some competing trucks currently shipping north through the corridor, West said.

Company officials hope to ease a proposed restriction that would keep the trucks off the road between 8 and 10 a.m.

In the latest proposal, Graniterock eliminates all plans for a recreational vehicle park that sparked much controversy last year. It was proposed in conjunction with the state Department of Parks and Recreation.

The company, West said, wants to stick to mining.

In addition, planning commissioners will be asked to impose a condition that says if a property owner — even if it is a public agency such as the state parks — wants to implement a post-mining use for the land, it must be approved by the county.

Supervisor Mardi Wormhoudt was the driving force behind that condition to ensure that the county would have a say in the land in the future, West said.

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During the heated issue of the RV park, it was clear that local residents wanted control, Wormhoudt said.

Graniterock would ultimately have to complete a reclamation plan once it is finished with its mining.

"The point here is whether it is sold to a private interest or sold or given to state parks or the county, local people through local representatives would have a say whether use was an appropriate use for that land and that location," Wormhoudt said.

Any plans for harvesting the sand will have to be done with the red-legged frog in mind. The frog was listed as a threatened species in May, requiring Graniterock to obtain authorization from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service if the project could result in the "take" of any frogs.

The company is paying close to \$40,000 for a plan on how to conserve the frogs' habitat. Fourteen frogs were seen during a recent survey.

*The meeting begins at 9 a.m. Wednesday at the Board of Supervisors Chamber at the County Government Center, 701 Ocean St.*