



## FORUM: The quarry won't hurt us as opponents claim

By Rick Kellogg | Posted: Monday, January 24, 2011 5:10 pm

I jumped into the debate over Liberty Quarry a few years ago because I had firsthand experience in the aggregate business, and I knew that some opponents of the quarry were using misinformation to support their position.

Reasonable people can disagree on any issue, and there are always good people on both sides. However, I have learned from talking to people who oppose the quarry that most of their objections are based on distortions coming from the group called Save Our Southwest Hills. I find it interesting that many of the most egregious errors made by opponents are from those who ask readers to go to the SOS-Hills website for information.

Several writers have claimed that if Liberty Quarry is allowed to operate, 1,600 more trucks will pass through Temecula each day. That is false. Liberty Quarry will result in a net reduction in truck traffic in and around Temecula.

Here are the facts as discussed in the county's draft environmental impact report: Right now, 4,500 tractor/trailer rigs pass through Temecula on Interstate 15 daily, many hauling aggregate to San Diego County. When Liberty Quarry is operating at maximum capacity, there will be fewer than 700 truckloads leaving the plant on the busiest day of the year, and two-thirds of those will be traveling south to San Diego County.

Since Liberty Quarry is south of Temecula, that alone represents a reduction of about 466 gravel trucks that currently pass through Temecula, or more than 10 percent of all big-rigs on I-15. Also, loads hauled from Liberty Quarry to Temecula will no longer have to pass through Murrieta, Wildomar, Lake Elsinore or Corona, further reducing truck traffic on I-15.

All trucks leaving Liberty Quarry will pass through one of the CHP truck scales and inspection stations on I-15, virtually eliminating the possibility that owners of trucks with safety defects or pollution issues will want to haul from the quarry.

In addition, Granite Construction will be adding northbound and southbound exit lanes at Rainbow Valley Boulevard, three traffic signals, one additional truck lane at the southbound scale and one additional scale.

Also, sales tax on all loads going into San Diego County will be collected by Riverside County.

It appears, too, that some of the opponents can't even agree on where the quarry will be ---- some say south of Temecula, some say west of Temecula and others claim it will be on the Temecula border.

I checked my map again and found the quarry will still be hidden from view about three miles south of Temecula proper, on the border of San Diego and Riverside counties, adjacent to Rainbow Valley Boulevard and a considerable distance from any major population center.

The vicinity of the quarry site is not conducive to residential housing, and it is doubtful any developer would be able to build in that area.

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