



FORUM: Stick to the facts on the quarry

By Greg Morrison | Posted: Monday, June 13, 2011 9:00 pm

It's always nice to have the facts on your side. Unless, of course, you are the opponents of Liberty Quarry, in which case you just make them up as you go.

Too often I see blatant misinformation being communicated about this project. A prime example is Nick Biddle's June 7 letter, titled ["Are We Hypnotized Yet."](#) This letter was full of misinformation that needs to be set straight.

First, Biddle notes that "a large asphalt plant will be at Liberty Quarry. It will stink and poison the neighborhood." He references a facility in North Carolina as evidence; that N.C. facility is actually an asphalt oil refinery, not just an asphalt plant. While their names may be similar, their functions and processes are vastly different. An oil refinery can be thought of as a type of chemical plant, where crude oil is processed through large industrial complexes and refined into a petroleum product. An asphalt plant combines sand, gravel and a binding product to create road material.

Second, Biddle makes another false claim that "a large cement plant will be at Liberty Quarry." Liberty Quarry will have a concrete plant on its premises, not a cement plant. Cement is a basic ingredient in concrete, much as flour is a basic ingredient in cake. Concrete plants are quite common; in fact, three concrete plants operate in Temecula and Murrieta.

Last, Biddle states that "ammonium nitrate, used in the daily blasting, is poisonous in the air and nearby river and well drinking water." The project's [Environmental Impact Report](#) (EIR), which was conducted by a third-party consultant, analyzed the potential impacts and found absolutely no chance of significant health impacts, even at the maximum possible levels and including the workers on the site being exposed 10 hours a day for 40-plus years.

The state of California has very strict laws and guidelines for the approval of a quarry. Liberty Quarry has been the subject of numerous studies to ensure it will not impact the environment or the quality of life for residents.

Unfortunately, project opponents are not bound by the same policies or standard, and use any false or misleading information they wish to support their claims. They can distort facts, misrepresent data and make claims that are clearly not true because they are ultimately not held responsible for the statements they make.

I personally have spent a tremendous amount of time reviewing the project EIR and believe in the process we have in place. The EIR should be the document that policymakers use in determining whether or not to approve a project.

Liberty Quarry's EIR is clear. Our region is better off with Liberty Quarry than without it. The project will remove 16 million truck miles each year and eliminate 200 tons of air pollutants annually. It will create jobs and tax revenue for a region in desperate need of both.

Don't take my word for it. Look at the EIR and see for yourself.