



STATE MINING AND GEOLOGY BOARD

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT



ARNOLD
SCHWARZENEGGER
GOVERNOR

For Meeting Date: July 10, 2008

Agenda Item No. 4: Approval of an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration and Amended Reclamation Plan for the Parks Bar Quarry (CA Mine ID #91-58-0013), Nordic Industries, Inc. (Operator), Mr. Jens Karlshowj (Agent), Yuba County.

INTRODUCTION: Under the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMARA, Public Resources Code Section (PRC) 2710 et seq.), a surface mining operation must have a reclamation plan and financial assurance approved by its respective lead agency. The State Mining and Geology Board (SMGB) is the SMARA lead agency for Yuba County, and is responsible for the review and approval of reclamation plans, financial assurances, and environmental documents. The SMGB is considering approval of a Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and Amended Reclamation Plan for the surface mining operation known as the Parks Bar Quarry, located in Yuba County.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Parks Bar Quarry is an active aggregate surface mining operation located in Yuba County (portions of Sections 19, 20, and 29, Township 16 North, Range 6 East, Mount Diablo Base and Meridian, on Highway 20, near New Parks Bar Bridge). The overall topography of the site is characterized by gently rolling hills. The westerly flowing Yuba River borders the site to the south, and the entrance to the site is via Highway 20. The site includes a scale house, quarry and product stockpile areas, above ground fuel tank, and boneyard. The original quarry pit extended along a north-south oriented ridge, and is characterized as a U-shaped quarry that opens to the south. Overburden is placed on the east and west ridges of the pit area. The site is underlain by metavolcanics, notably pillow basalts, of uncertain Jurassic-Triassic age. A thin veneer of reddish silty clay topsoil and decomposed rock overlies bedrock in the area. Material extraction is planned to proceed toward the north.

The project is the approval and implementation of an Amended Reclamation Plan for the Parks Bar Quarry. Since the applicant currently is operating at the site under vested conditions, only the approval of the Amended Reclamation Plan is within the scope of this review. The approval and implementation of the Amended Reclamation Plan would bring the applicant's operation into compliance with SMARA and the SMGB's regulations for surface mining and reclamation practice (California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 14, Chapter 8, Article 1, Section 3500 et seq.; Article 9, Section 3700 et seq.). The SMARA lead agency for the approval of the project is the SMGB.

California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA): The SMGB is the CEQA lead agency for the IS/MND, and has the principal responsibility for the environmental review of the



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proposed project, and preparing and adopting the proposed IS/MND, and relies on the IS/MND to make its own findings and determinations pertaining to the approval of the amended reclamation plan.

An IS/MND, dated May 2008, has been prepared for this site by Department of Conservation, Office of Mine Reclamation (OMR) staff and is subject to review by the SMGB acting as the SMARA lead agency. The IS/MND was forwarded to the State Clearinghouse for public review and comment (SCH #2008012061). The review and comment period closed on June 12, 2008. No state agencies submitted comments by that date, and the MND was deemed in compliance with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to CEQA.

The IS/MND was prepared in order to meet the SMGB's lead agency obligation for environmental review under CEQA. The initial study supports a finding that the SMGB adopts a MND of impact to meet its environmental review obligation under CEQA. If the SMGB finds the Initial Study is adequate under CEQA, it must also adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan prior to approving the Parks Bar Quarry proposed amended reclamation plan.

Amended Reclamation Plan: The reclamation plan for the Parks Bar Quarry was approved by the SMGB in 2004. The surface mining operation currently encompasses approximately 31 acres. Nordic Industries, Inc. proposed, with submittal of an amended reclamation plan, to expand its current operation, encompassing approximately 145 acres of the 276 acres that make up the property ownership limits.

An Amended Reclamation Plan, dated June 2007, was prepared by EnviroMINE, Inc. on behalf of Nordic Industries, Inc. The plan was reviewed by OMR and SMGB staff, and was considered consistent and complete in meeting the minimum requirements of SMARA and the SMGB's regulations.

SMGB CONSIDERATIONS: The SMGB may take the following actions:

1. Approve, as adequate, the IS/MND and Amended Reclamation Plan, without additions;

[or]

2. Modify the IS/MND and/or Amended Reclamation Plan, with Additions, and then accept the documents as adequate;

[or]



3. Reject the IS/MND and/or Amended Reclamation Plan, as inadequate, and order them to be redone.

EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S RECOMMENDATION: The IS/MND and Amended Reclamation Plan were reviewed by SMGB and OMR staff. The Executive Officer has reviewed the IS/MND and June 2007 Amended Reclamation Plan and recommends the SMGB accepts these documents as adequate and prepared in accordance with the CEQA, SMARA (PRC Section 2710, et seq.) and the SMGB's regulations (California Code of Regulations (CCR) Title 14, Chapter 8, Article 1, Section 3500, et seq.; Article 9, Section 3700, et seq.).

SUGGESTED SMGB MOTION:

To approve the IS/MND:

Mr. Chairman, in light of the information before the State Mining and Geology Board today, I move that the Board approve the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration, for the surface mining operation known as Parks Bar Quarry located in Yuba County, as complete and prepared in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975, and the Board's regulations.

To approve the June 2007 Amended Reclamation Plan:

Mr. Chairman, in light of the information before the State Mining and Geology Board today, I move that the Board approve the June 2007 Amended Reclamation Plan for the surface mining operation known as Parks Bar Quarry located in Yuba County, as complete and prepared in accordance with the requirements of California Environmental Quality Act, the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 and the Board's regulations.

Respectfully submitted:

Stephen M. Testa
Executive Officer

