

The Real Straight Talk – Part 1

The format of the questions and answers below resembles that of CEMEX's paid advertisements. CEMEX's original questions and answers remain unchanged. The accurate responses are in blue italics font below.

The sources for all of the City's statements below are contained in endnotes and are readily verifiable. We encourage you to visit CEMEX's website at www.CemexUSA.com and read about the mega mine in Soledad Canyon and the company from their point of view. Then please compare their claims to our facts.

Please also see Part 2 and 3.

THE REAL STRAIGHT TALK: Part 1 On Soledad Canyon

There have been a lot of questions about the Soledad Canyon project. We'd like to help answer them.

| Question | Answer |
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| <i>Exactly what is the Soledad Canyon Project?</i> | <p><i>Cemex's Answer:</i> It is simply an aggregate ("sand and gravel") mining project. CEMEX has contracted the mining rights to this property from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for a number of years. Soledad Canyon has been a mining site since the 1960s.</p> <p><i>Accurate Answer:</i> "Simply an aggregate mining project"? At 69</p> |

million tons! we were told that it is one of the biggest aggregate mines ever approved by the BLM!

- *It will remove enough material to fill the Rose Bowl 127 timesⁱⁱ;*
- *It will exceed by 250% the maximum risk allowed by the Air Quality Management District Toxic Rules for new emissionsⁱⁱⁱ;*
- *It will exceed State air quality standards for particulate emissions by 200%^{iv};*
- *It will generate up to 1,164 daily truck trips on our roads, 24 hours a day 7 days a week^v;*
- *It will drain the Santa Clara River of year-round surface flows, killing fully-protected endangered species^{vii}; and,*
- *It will likely reduce property values due to heavy truck traffic, dust, and noise.*

Sure this site has had mining in the past, but Cemex wants to increase the 300,000 ton historic mining levels by 1,600%^{viii}!

I've heard a lot about the possibility that my commute may be impacted by the Soledad Canyon project. What precautions are [sic] CEMEX taking to help prevent traffic problems?

Cemex's Answer: The traffic impacts on the Antelope Valley freeway are minimal. The project will only increase volume on the Antelope Valley freeway by about 1.5%. We, [sic]at CEMEX, however, realize that any traffic effects are important to commuters. That's why we have voluntarily restricted the number of inbound and outbound truck trips to 8 in the peak morning period and 20 in the peak evening period.

Accurate Answer: *The mine is permitted to generate up to 1,164 truck trips 24 hours per day 7 day per week; an average of 1 truck trip every 1.2 minutes. That this may be 1.5% is irrelevant. 1,164 trucks trips are 1,164 truck trips, regardless of whether it is 1.5%, 15%, or 150% of traffic volume. It is still A LOT of trucks! Furthermore, according to the Highway Capacity Manual produced by the Transportation Research Board, on the Antelope Valley Freeway each gravel truck impacts traffic at the equivalent of 4 cars. That*

means that these 1,164 truck trips are the equivalent to 4,584 cars or, using CEMEX's traffic volumes for the Antelope Valley Freeway, over 6.5% of traffic volume. This is a significant impact to traffic!

Furthermore, CEMEX's "voluntary" restrictions on the number of trucks entering/leaving at peak hours are without merit. Though one of the conditions of approval for the project states that CEMEX must limit inbound/outbound trucks at peak hours (condition 13), if the measures intended to meet these restrictions (which include a telephone message, signs, and flyers) fail to do so, it "...shall not constitute a violation of the permit." CEMEX can violate these restrictions with no repercussions whatsoever!

Finally, CEMEX only controls access to and from their site. Though they may be able to limit trucks entering/leaving their site, they can't limit the number of trucks driving on our roads at peak hours. Hundreds of trucks can still drive down the Antelope Valley freeway and Soledad Canyon road during rush hour and park along Soledad Canyon Road to wait to get into the mine site, a common practice at many mines.

Does the project put Santa Clarita's environment at risk?

Cemex's Answer: No. In addition to full state and environmental review, the Soledad Canyon project includes numerous mitigation measures. We have already committed to donate nearly \$2 million to create an Open/Space/Visual, Air Quality, and Traffic Fund. This fund will be dedicated to improve, enhance, and replenish open space, parks, trails, and traffic improvements in area communities, as well as to assist in the enhancement of air quality.

Accurate Answer: *Of course it does! The EIR, prepared by Cemex, even says that it will^x! When the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors approved the project, they adopted Statements of Overriding Considerations which expressly acknowledge significant, unavoidable adverse impacts to the environment.*

The wells that are planned in the Santa Clara River to provide water to the mega-mine WILL drain the only area downstream where there is year round surface flow, killing fully-protected endangered species which rely on it. The toxic air pollution emitted from the mine WILL exceed State maximums by 250%! Traffic impacts WILL be significant.

Regarding the Open Space/Visual, Air Quality, and Traffic Fund: there is no commitment from CEMEX to donate to the fund, it is a required condition of approval (number 36). Also, it is not "nearly \$2 million", it is for \$1,550,000, about 25% less than CEMEX claims. Also, CEMEX gets to pay into the fund in annual installments. It won't reach the full amount for 11 years after commencement of mining operations! Also, the \$1.5 million dollars is not a mitigation measure! It is a condition of approval! It does not mitigate any of the significant impacts from this project.

What will \$1.5 million buy? Not much. \$1.5 million would pay for the replacement of about 1.5 miles of Soledad Canyon Road^x, the road that will experience the most wear and tear from the up to 1,164 daily trucks trips from the mine. There will be nothing left to put towards the \$31 million dollars that the school districts will need to upgrade their air conditioning systems to protect our children from the mine's air pollution^{xi}. Nothing will be left to "improve, enhance and replenish open space, parks, trails, and traffic improvements in area communities, as well as to assist in the enhancement of air quality" as CEMEX claims. Nothing will be left to help offset the costs of increased emergency room visits due to respiratory ailments caused by the mine's air pollution^{xii}.

\$1.5 million will do nothing to address the adverse impacts of this mine

I'm concerned about my property value. Will the project be unsightly and noisy?

Cemex's Answer: The operations will be out of sight of the people living in developed communities and motorists using the Antelope Valley Freeway. In our commitment to the community, CEMEX has also agreed to limit its hours of operations and construct sound prohibiting walls at various

locations.

Accurate Answer: 1,164 trucks on the Antelope Valley freeway will NOT be out of sight, dust and diesel emissions will NOT be out of sight, the removal of the top of a prominent ridgeline will NOT be out of sight, visiting the emergency room with your asthmatic child will NOT be out of sight^{xiii}!

As far as property values, would you buy a house near a huge aggregate mine?

Finally, concerning the limited hours of operation that CEMEX has agreed to out of a "commitment to the community", condition 13 allows concrete batch plant operations and trucking activities 24 hours a day 7 days a week! That means trucks on our roads 24 hours per day! Mining, crushing, and processing activities can occur 17 hours per day 6 days a week! Is this really a "commitment" to our community?

i Condition of Approval 9.aa.

ii Rose bowl capacity if filled with water - 84,375,000 gallons (from www.rosebowlstadium.com) One acre-foot of water = 325,851 gallons. 84,375,000 divided by 325,851 = 259 acre-feet in the Rose Bowl. One acre-foot of water contains 43,560 cubic feet multiplied by 259 acre-feet = 11,282,040 cubic feet. 11,282,040 divided by 27 cubic feet (1 cubic yard) = 417,853 cubic yards of space in the Rose Bowl. There is 69,000,000 tons of material in the mine or 138,000,000,000 pounds. One yard of aggregate averages 2,600 pounds (multiple websites range from 2,500-2,700 lbs). 138,000,000,000 divided by 2,600 = 53,076,923 cubic yards of material coming out of the mine. 53,076,923 cy divided by the 417,853 cy capacity of the Rose Bowl is 127.

iii From AQMD

iv Air Quality Sections of Draft EIR and "Additional Environmental Information to the Draft EIR"

v Page 3-292 of Draft EIR and Page 16 of the BLM's Record of Decision

vi Condition of Approval 9.p.4.

vii Draft Hydrogeologic Report, March 14, 2005 prepared by RTF&A Geotechnical Engineering & Engineering Geology

viii The previous mine operator at the site mined an average 300,000 tons per year. An increase to 5,000,000 tons represents an increase of over 1,600%.

ix CEQA Findings of Fact for the Final EIR for the Soledad Canyon Sand and Gravel Mining Project, LA County Project Number 91111066, November 2001

x The replacement of 1 mile of 2-lane road is estimated to cost approximately \$900,000 per City's Capital Improvement Programs Division

xi Preliminary Economic Impact Study Soledad Canyon Surface Mining Project Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning," prepared for the Wm S Hart Union High Schools District and the Sulphur Springs School District, by Mechanical Systems Consulting Engineers, May 21, 2001.

xii UCLA Study: <http://www.healthpolicy.ucla.edu/pubs/publication.asp?pubID=181>; Orange County Register, August 17, 2006: "For asthmatics, traffic takes their breath away"-

http://www.ocregister.com/ocregister/homepage/abox/article_1245631.php