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August 16, 2009

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

On behalf of the Pt. San Pedro Road Coalition, I ask for your support on a serious Marin County public health issue. In 1999, the San Rafael Rock Quarry was listed as #1 in PM-10 (Particulate Matter) emissions in Marin County according to Scorecard (link at www.sprcoalition.org/committee_quarry/news.html) and in the top 10 in many other air pollutants. Over the past decade, the Coalition has fought for healthy air for our community. The Quarry is a 750-acre open pit and strip mining operation surrounded by residential neighborhoods, directly adjacent to McNear's Beach Park, and a short distance from two elementary schools. The Quarry has applied to the Marin County Board of Supervisors for permits to continue, and expand, operations. For the first time in its long history, it is undergoing an environmental review (EIR). A critical public hearing concerning certification of the Final EIR (FEIR) is scheduled for August 25.

As a mother, I am deeply concerned about the effect of toxic emissions on our children. I am inspired by the successful efforts of other grassroots organizations on environmental issues. The Coalition is asking for your help to ensure healthy air for our children, the elderly and all of us who live, work and recreate in Marin.

Details regarding Quarry operations, community impacts, court rulings and the current environmental review can all be found on our website at www.sprcoalition.org under the S.R. Rock Quarry Committee tab. In summary, the Quarry emits microscopic, jagged-edged crystalline quartz silica into the air as a result of blasting, crushing and transportation that is spread by the wind and, when inhaled, can become lodged in the lungs and cannot be expelled. In addition, diesel trucks on Pt. San Pedro Road emit particulates that are known carcinogens. Individually and together, this air pollution poses serious, long-term, and permanent health risks to everyone, especially the young and the elderly. These risks include cancer, heart disease, asthma, and silicosis (a debilitating and potentially lethal respiratory disease) among others.

If approved, the Quarry's expanded operations may go on for decades. The quarry has been using out-dated equipment and techniques but the FEIR does not require immediate implementation of well-known industry "best practices" to reduce related health risks. Instead, it allows two more years to "study" the situation and implement recommendations. Continued dispersion of known dangerous air pollutants by the Quarry poses a significant, unnecessary, and avoidable public health risk that should not be allowed. The Quarry has recently sent out a slick, misleading PR piece denying the dangers. More than ever, we need the support of those that care about our environment.

Please join us and help spread the word about the upcoming August 25 Supervisors' meeting on the Quarry to your friends and through your community organizations. It will be held in the Board's meeting room, 3rd floor, Marin County Civic Center, most likely in the afternoon, although the agenda with the exact time is yet to be released.

It is extremely important that there be a strong community showing on these issues. In addition to personally attending, I hope you will write and call your representative on the Board of Supervisors—and urge others to do the same. Also, please let me know via email if we can list you and/or your organization as supporting our cause.

I would appreciate hearing from you. Thank you in advance and we hope to see you on August 25!

Bonnie Marmor, Co-President
Pt. San Pedro Road Coalition
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p.s. Here is the contact information for the Marin County Board of Supervisors:

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