

# Gravel pit representatives pitch site

Aaron Burnett

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LAMAR, Colo. -

Representatives from the proposed gravel pit operation in the West Farm area east of Lamar met with landowners adjacent to the proposed lot as well as the board of county commissioners Friday.

The proposed gravel mining operation would be located approximately one half mile east of the city of Lamar and could potentially encompass up to 233 acres. The operation, which is still in the planning and permitting process, had drawn the ire of several neighbors to the south of the proposed site. At least one neighbor had filed a letter of objection with the state concerning the proposed operation.

Karl Nyquist, a manager of GP Ranches, the company attempting to develop the mining operation, said he has met personally with several of the residents adjacent to the proposed site to discuss their concerns. Nyquist told the commissioners that the operation's plans would be modified to relieve some of the neighbors' concerns. Specifically, the developer said the crushing and storage operation would be moved farther north in an attempt to lessen the impact of the operation on residents on the south side of county road HH.5.

Nyquist also said a proposed rail spur would likely be re-engineered in light of concerns from both neighbors and the board of commissioners. The original design of the rail spur called for a circle to be constructed, allowing the trains to turn around after loading. Concern over the spur arose because, as proposed, it would cross CR HH.5 and the proposed route of the truck bypass twice. Nyquist said a new spur would likely be designed with these concerns in mind.

Dan Rasmussen, who lives directly across from the proposed mining operation, told the Ledger in a follow-up interview Monday that he and his family remained concerned over noise and air pollution from the mining operation. "The sound of crushing and sorting, you can hear that in town, let alone less than a quarter of a mile away," Rasmussen said.

The original plans called for the crushing operation to be located directly across from the Rasmussens' property. He said that while he was pleased that the crushing and sorting operation would be moved further north, he remained concerned that the operation could adversely affect not only his own health, but that of his neighbors and relatives.

"No, we are not removing the complaint," Rasmussen said. "We are going forward with it because of the safety factors."

Todd Yee, an engineer from J & T Consulting, outlined the site plans for the board of commissioners. Yee said the proposed mining operation would involve two separate pits with an access road between them. The larger of the two pits would be located north of the access road while the smaller pit and the sorting and crushing operation would be located to the south of the access road.

Nyquist estimated the pits to be in operation for 20 to 30 years depending on demand. He said the operation would likely provide six to eight jobs during the duration of the pits' operation. The majority of the aggregate is expected to be used for construction projects along the Front Range and in other states such as California.

The developer told the board of commissioners that his company was exploring options to lease water storage rights in the larger of the two pits at the conclusion of operations at the site.

A public hearing concerning the proposed operation is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb.. 10 beginning at 7 p.m. in the Mezzanine room at the county annex.

And you wonder why it is so hard to get new companies to come to our town...

bluebird

1/27/2009 12:11:46 PM

Wow...there you go...a new company...increase in tax base...here we go again...complaints complaints complaints...you can't have it both ways...either you are for growth or we stay where we are...

beentheredonethat

1/27/2009 2:17:31 PM

I'm thinking out loud....

Why does the plant have to be right THERE? Can't it be farther away from town?

And isn't that close to the the Higbee Wildlife area, albeit is across the highway and the river.Won't the noise and dust chase off the wildlife (not to mention the people)?

And HOW many will it give jobs to?

Is there any kind of mandated requirement that that the land must be reclaimed (or beautified) within so many years after the area has been dug up? Or is this going to be just one more scar left where another greedy sod has used and abused the land?

Was anyone in the area offered a buyout by GP Ranches? The dust alone may become a problem in the area...Silicosis is a horrible way to go.

Just thoughts to consider...

RogersFancy

1/27/2009 5:11:36 PM

RogersFancy...A public hearing concerning the proposed operation is scheduled for Tuesday, Feb. 10 beginning at 7 p.m. in the Mezzanine room at the county annex...I am sure they can answer all your questions and concerns...I am sure this is not their first rodeo....

beentheredonethat

1/27/2009 5:22:00 PM

You know, the problem is that the Prowers County Commissioners are going to do whatever the h#\*l they want and it probably wouldn't matter how many people show up. Time and time again it has been proven. What is wrong with all the idiot "powers that be" in this neck of the woods?

What I find really strange is that in the article it says that the aggregate is expected to be used in the front range area for construction and as far away as California, and the idiots couldn't find a place closer to the front range to tear some land up?

Lastly, why couldn't they find a place further out in the country instead of so close to Highway 50. Now that's attractive. Compared to Lamar, La Junta (for the most part) know how and what businesses to bring. Hey, maybe we could trade Lamar's City Council and Otero County Commissioners with ours!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Couldn't do any worse....LOL

I could go on and on, but..... WHY? I think you get my picture!!

hotdog

1/27/2009 7:26:24 PM

When I was younger, we had an alfalfa mill blowing in from one direction, a feed lot coming from another direction and a hog farm from another direction. This is southeastern colorado, if you can get used to the different smells then you still have to put up with gravel roads and dust storms. It seems in all the articles I've read, there is basically only one family complaining.

In today's economy we should be grateful someone is interested in giving us some new jobs. The commissioners are doing a fine job, keep up the good work !!!!!!!!!!!

pantherplumber

1/28/2009 4:46:16 PM

panterplumber....gee that didn't take much thinking did it...wake up people...we need everything we can get...tax dollars....jobs...great job County Commissioners...alfalfa the smell of money...feed lots the smell of money...hog farms again the smell of money...we are rural America and we are proud of it...bring it on County

beentheredonethat

1/28/2009 6:28:42 PM