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# Marin County approves San Rafael quarry analysis contract



The San Rafael Rock Quarry is seeking a 20-year extension to its agreement with Marin County. (IJ file photo)

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Marin County supervisors have approved a plan to study the environmental consequences of an additional 20 years of mining at the San Rafael Rock Quarry.

The Dutra Group, which owns the quarry at 1000 Point San Pedro Road, was granted permission by the county in 2010 to mine the site until 2024. But the company applied last year to [extend that agreement](#) by two decades and continue mining until 2044. The proposal needs approval from the county Board of Supervisors.

Supervisors voted unanimously on Tuesday to approve a \$259,263 [contract](#) with Sicular Environmental Consulting to complete an environmental review for the proposal. The Dutra Group has agreed to pay for the total cost of the review, plus an additional \$77,778 to pay for county staff's time spent on the project, officials said.

The county did not seek applications from firms interested in completing the review. It chose Sicular because its proprietor, Dan Sicular, completed an environmental impact report for the quarry's existing agreement with the county in 2008, officials said.

"We anticipate that the current proposal will result in an addendum or supplement to that 2008 (report), so it made sense to retain Dan Sicular for the job," said Rachel Reid, county environmental planning manager

A spokeswoman for the Point San Pedro Road Coalition, a neighborhood group that acts as a quarry watchdog, said it was "unfortunate" that supervisors approved the contract while Marin is on a coronavirus lockdown. She said the environmental review will be subject to "close scrutiny."

"The community will benefit by a thorough environmental review and we will continue to advocate for that on behalf of area residents," said coalition co-president Bonnie Marmor.

The Dutra Group, which has owned the quarry since 1986, is seeking a 20-year extension because production has slowed over the past decade, said Aimi Dutra, a company spokeswoman.

On average, the company annually extracts less than half of the amount of material it did 10 years ago. Dutra said that's because the demand for construction materials for both public and private construction projects slowed after the Great Recession. As a result, the company needs more time to extract the 17.5 million tons of rock that are part of the quarry's vested mining rights, she said.

The company has faced scrutiny from neighbors and Marin County officials over its past practices, which included expanding operations on the site beyond what was allowed by the county. As a result, the company came to its current agreement with the county in 2010, establishing a new annual production limit and limited operating hours and the number of daily truck trips in and out of the quarry.

The company also agreed on a plan to reclaim the site when mining ceases. According to that agreement, Dutra plans to cut a channel between the mining pit and the bay, create a 600-berth marina and develop 350 homes as well as office and commercial building. The company hasn't applied for approval of those construction plans.

Dutra said the company's request for an additional 20 years of mining would not change the details of the reclamation plan or the operating conditions in that agreement, except for the timeline.

"Our relations with the community and the county over the last decade have been constructive and positive," she said. "I don't expect anything to change on that front."

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