

Carson Hill asphalt plant nears completion

Hogan Quarry remains under consideration

By Nick Baptista / The Valley Springs News / Wednesday, July 20, 2016

CB Asphalt Inc. expects to have its hot-mix asphalt plant at Carson Hill fully operational next week.

The announcement was made Thursday by Shawn Simmons, CB Asphalt's western division manager.

Although CB Asphalt has shifted much of the equipment intended for the proposed asphalt plant at the Hogan Quarry near Valley Springs to Carson Hill, CB Asphalt and its partners have not necessarily abandoned plans for the Hogan asphalt plant, according to Simmons's release.

Once CB Asphalt completes contracted deliveries to Caltrans and others "our partnership intends to analyze and explore options that may utilize combined efforts and or resources within our considerable collective means," Simmons said. "These options include confirming the likelihood of a second Hot Plant facility at the Hogan location, as well as numerous other possibilities that are being analyzed by our market research team."

Expanding use of the Foothill Materials Inc. quarry at 3650 Hogan Dam Road to include asphalt production has been a controversial topic since mid-2015.

Neighbors have complained about the use of hazardous materials at the site, noxious odors, potential to contaminate the Calaveras River and likelihood of increased truck traffic through their neighborhoods. They would like the applicants to go through the conditional use permit process and give the county authority to mitigate any harmful impacts associated with the operation if it were approved.

Simmons cited approval delays for the Hogan quarry as necessitating the shift to Carson Hill to fulfill pending contracts and commitments.

The Carson Hill facility is undergoing a rigorous series of inspections and approvals through numerous government agencies, he said, and "these efforts will not only guarantee conformance to all governing operational requirements, but will provide increased understanding and transparency with respect to facility operational procedures."

With the Carson Hill asphalt plant nearing completion, CB Asphalt and its partners have already hired additional employees from Calaveras County, Simmons said, "and we are making

provisions to increase the hours of existing employees in support of our efforts. What's more, we have also hired numerous owner/operator truck drivers for numerous weeks now who also live here in Calaveras County."

Support for placing an asphalt plant has been cited as a major reason for the recall effort against District 5 Supervisor Steve Kearney.

Clyde Clapp, a Kearney recall proponent and announced candidate for the Nov. 8 election to succeed Kearney as the District 5 supervisor, said CB Asphalt's continuation to pursue placing an asphalt plant near Valley Springs will harm the political chances of both Kearney and District 1 Supervisor Cliff Edson, who is up for re-election in the fall.

"These guys (CB Asphalt) just cut the feet off of Steve and Cliff," Clapp said about the announcement.

The full text of CB Asphalt's July 14 press release can be viewed at valleysprings.news.