

# Coski Sand and Gravel Mine

*A company called Terra5 LLC, owned by the Scarsella Bros., is hoping to mine sand and gravel from the Coski Mine, located between the Hylebos Waterway and Northeast Tacoma homes. Even though information on the project is extremely limited, the City of Tacoma has stated that they will likely not require a full Environmental Impact Statement as part of their environmental review. Let's work together to change that...*



## **Project Background**

Terra5 Company LLC is looking to reopen the long inactive Coski Mine along Marine View Drive. They aim to mine 400,000 cubic yards of sand and gravel over the next ten years, enough earth to *fill a third of the Tacoma Dome*. At peak operation, the project would require up to 600 trips per day to move all of this material. Mining would take place during the day and loading would occur both day and night, with 2-5 employees working on-site. The 17-acre site, zoned mostly as residential, is located at 2500 Marine View Drive. If Terra5 is successfully able to reopen the mine, operations could begin as early as June of this year.

## **Environmental and Health Concerns**

The choice of location is a critical factor when assessing these kinds of projects. In this case, the mine is only 450 feet downhill from the closest home. It is also directly uphill from the Hylebos, a waterway with serious environmental problems already. A short

distance down the shore is Squally Beach, an important restored habitat site. The mine also cuts into a forested hillside, which provides wildlife habitat while buffering Northeast Tacoma residents from the impacts of industrial port activities. Finally, it is possible that the site contains contaminated materials from illegal landfills, like those found on neighboring sites, or from large steel drums currently stored there. If so, mining activities may release this hazardous contamination.

This sensitive location also means that the impacts from mining and trucking will be felt particularly hard by local residents, as well as the birds, salmon and other wildlife that depend on the area.

It's difficult to know exactly what hazards the project might create, but concerns stem both from mining itself and the trucking of mined materials. Both would create noise day and night, disturbing wildlife and neighborhoods

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alike. Dust and other air emissions would also not be contained on-site and could further degrade local air and water quality already suffering from other pollution sources. There are also traffic impacts to consider, which were not fully analyzed in the traffic analysis submitted to the City by project backers.

## **Insufficient Environmental Review**

Despite the proposed mine's precarious location and potential impacts, the City of Tacoma is planning to issue a "Mitigated Determination of Non-significance," meaning that the project will **not** need an Environmental Impact Statement as part of their review.

Without an Environmental Impact Statement, we will not have the scientific information we need to know how this project will impact our environment and community. It also means that the public will have far fewer opportunities to influence the City's decision. If the City grants a Conditional Use Permit, the company will be able to apply for a mining permit with the state.

This decision is based on an application, submitted by the project backers, that the biologists, chemists, and other experts at Citizens for a Healthy Bay find fraught with incomplete or incorrect information. Its problems include a failure to mention:

- Eagles, heron, salmon and other threatened species near or on the site;
- A complete list of native and invasive plant species near or on the site;
- The Hylebos waterway in its list of nearby water bodies;
- Air emission specifics on and off site.

These problems do not bode well for the transparency and reputability of the company, which would be responsible for protecting local natural resources, such as on-site wetlands, should the project move forward.

## **Take action!**

We have very limited time to push for a full Environmental Impact Statement. *The City of Tacoma will accept public comments until **March 3<sup>rd</sup>*** and will make a final decision by the end of April 2017. Comments can be submitted by emailing Shirley Schultz at [shirley.schultz@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:shirley.schultz@cityoftacoma.org). Email [rcruz@healthybay.org](mailto:rcruz@healthybay.org) to receive a public comment template that you can use or modify.

The recent methanol controversy in the Port of Tacoma has shown us just how critical a full Environmental Impact Statement is. Tacomans want to know what's happening in their community and they want project decisions to be made based on solid science. Help us tell the City of Tacoma to do their homework before they make the call!

**Email Ryan Cruz at [rcruz@healthybay.org](mailto:rcruz@healthybay.org) with questions or to receive updates on this important issue and others like it.**

**Find more information at [Healthybay.org](http://Healthybay.org)**



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