

# Three Rivers Stone Quarry Expansion



Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
ID-330-2006-EIS-1464  
December 2007





**THREE RIVERS STONE QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

*Prepared for*

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Challis Field Office  
Custer County  
801 Blue Mountain Road  
Challis, Idaho 83226

*On behalf of*

L&W Stone Corporation  
1036 South Street  
Orland, CA 95963

December 2007





# United States Department of the Interior



## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Challis Field Office  
801 Blue Mountain Road  
Challis, Idaho 83226  
(208) 879-6200

<http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/challis.html>

Reply to: ID-330-2006-EIS-1464

December 2007

Dear Interested Reader:

Enclosed for your review and comment is the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Three Rivers Stone Quarry Expansion Project* (DEIS). The Applicant, L&W Stone Company, has submitted a proposed Amended Plan of Operations to the Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Falls District, Challis Field Office (BLM), requesting to expand the quarry operations up to an additional 73 acres in order to increase mine production and to begin exploration to determine if additional marketable flagstone exists on their mining claims. The quarry is located roughly 5 miles east of the town of Clayton in Custer County, Idaho, just north of the confluence of the East Fork Salmon and Salmon rivers.

Based on the analysis of the proposed alternatives, the reader is being informed that the **agency preferred alternative at this time is Alternative D, Proposed Action**. A complete description of Alternative D and all other alternatives can be found in this DEIS.

This DEIS was prepared in accordance with the *National Environmental Policy Act, 1969* (NEPA) and with applicable laws and regulations passed subsequent to NEPA. It is intended to provide the public and agency decision makers with a complete and objective evaluation of impacts, beneficial and adverse, resulting from the Proposed Action and all reasonable alternatives.

To ensure a complete analysis, we are asking you to help by reviewing this DEIS and providing comments. The comment period for this document will close 45 days following the publication of the Notice of Availability by the Environmental Protection Agency in the Federal Register. Two public meetings will be scheduled, one in Boise and one in Challis, Idaho during the comment period to discuss the findings disclosed in this DEIS and accept public comment. The dates, times and exact location of the public meetings will be announced through one or more sources (project newsletter, local newspapers, or via website at [http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/challis/nepa/Three\\_Rivers.html](http://www.blm.gov/id/st/en/fo/challis/nepa/Three_Rivers.html)). A copy of the DEIS will be posted to this website.

Please send your written comments to: via mail      Chuck Horsburgh, Project Manager  
Bureau of Land Management  
1405 Hollipark Drive  
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401

via fax:      (208) 524-7505

via email:    Three\_Rivers\_EIS@blm.gov

The BLM will review and analyze the comments received and will then publish a Final EIS and Record of Decision in late 2008. Those who do not comment on the DEIS, or otherwise participate in this EIS process, may have limited options to appeal or protest the final decision. Federal court decisions have ruled that environmental objections that could have been raised at the draft stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of a Final EIS. This is to ensure substantive comments and objections are made available to the BLM when they can be meaningfully considered and responded to in the Final EIS.

Comments received on the DEIS, along with comments received during scoping or at other stages of this process, will be placed into the Administrative Record, where they will be available for public review. **Please be aware that information, such as addresses and phone numbers, may be viewed and copied by anyone with access to these public files in this open process.**

To be most helpful, comments on the DEIS should be specific, mentioning particular pages or chapters where appropriate. Comments may address the adequacy of the DEIS, the merits of the alternatives, or the procedures followed in the preparation of this document as called for under NEPA and its implementing regulations.

For a comment to be considered to have substance, it should:

- Provide new information pertaining to the Proposed Action or an alternative;
- Identify a new issue or expand upon an existing issue;
- Identify a different way to meet the underlying need;
- Provide an opinion regarding an alternative, **including the basis or rationale for the opinion;**
- Point out a specific flaw in the analysis; or
- Identify a different source of credible research which, if used in the analysis, could result in different effects.

For further information regarding this proposal, you may contact Chuck Horsburgh at (208) 524-7500; fax (208) 524-7505; or email at [Three\\_Rivers\\_EIS@blm.gov](mailto:Three_Rivers_EIS@blm.gov).

Thank you for your interest and participation in this analysis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Rosenkrance". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal flourish at the end.

David Rosenkrance  
Field Manager

Enclosure



**DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT  
FOR THE THREE RIVERS STONE QUARRY EXPANSION PROJECT  
CUSTER COUNTY, IDAHO**

**Lead Agency:** U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
Idaho Falls District  
Challis Field Office, Challis, Idaho

**Cooperating Agencies:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)  
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)

**Participating Agency:** Idaho Department of Fish and Game

**Tribal Governments:** Shoshone-Bannock Tribes

**Responsible Official:** David Rosenkrance  
Bureau of Land Management  
Challis Field Office Manager

**Further Information:** David Rosenkrance, Field Office Manager or  
Chuck Horsburgh, Project Manager  
BLM Idaho Falls District Office  
1405 Hollipark Drive  
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401  
(208) 524-7500  
e-mail: [Three\\_Rivers\\_EIS@blm.gov](mailto:Three_Rivers_EIS@blm.gov)

**ABSTRACT:**

This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Draft EIS) documents the analysis conducted for the proposed expansion of the Three Rivers Stone Quarry. The Three Rivers Stone Quarry is operated by L&W Stone Corporation, a privately owned stone retailer with corporate offices in Orland, California, and is mined for flagstone rock. The quarry is located near the town of Clayton in Custer County, Idaho, just north of the confluence of the East Fork Salmon and Salmon rivers and lies entirely on lands administered by the BLM Challis Field Office. L&W Stone is proposing to expand the production of flagstone at this mine. This would involve upgrading roads, expanding existing and potentially creating new pits, exploring for additional flagstone, drilling a well under an approved water right, and reclaiming disturbed areas.

Mining at the Three Rivers Stone Quarry has occurred since the 1970s. Mining is currently occurring at the quarry under an Interim Mining Plan. In 2005, as a result of a lawsuit, U.S.

District Court Judge Lynn Winmill ordered that an EIS be completed for the Amended Plan of Operations and alternatives submitted by L&W Stone in 2002 and analyzed in 2004 in an Environmental Assessment (EA). Judge Winmill has allowed L&W Stone to continue to operate under an Interim Mining Plan until the EIS is completed.

This Draft EIS has been completed which analyzes four alternatives in detail: Alternative A: The No Action Alternative, Alternative B: Continuation of the Interim Mining Plan, Alternative C: Preferred Alternative from the 2004 EA, and Alternative D: Proposed Action. Other agencies may tier to this analysis for any decisions they may make associated with this proposed project.

At this time, Alternative D has been identified as the preferred alternative after having considered the environmental impacts to public lands and the opportunities for use of those lands, which would benefit the most people over the longest term.

National Environmental Policy Act Disclosure Statement  
Bureau of Land Management Draft Environmental Impact Statement  
Three Rivers Stone Quarry Expansion

The President's Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations at 40 CFR 1506.5(c) require that consultants preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) execute a disclosure specifying they have no financial or other interest in the outcome of the project. The term "financial interest or other interest in the outcome of the project" for the purposes of this disclosure is defined in the March 23, 1981, guidance "Forty Most Asked Questions Concerning CEQ's National Environmental Policy Act Regulations," 46 FR 18026-18038 at Questions 17a and b.

"Financial interest or other interest in the outcome of the project" includes "any financial benefits such as promise of future construction or design work in the project, as well as indirect benefits the contractor is aware of (e.g., if the project would aid proposals sponsored by the firm's other clients)," 46 FR 18026-18038 at 18031.

In accordance with the above-referenced regulatory requirements, URS Corporation has prepared this Draft EIS on behalf of the Bureau of Land Management and declares no financial or other interest in the outcome of the proposed project.

Certified by:



\_\_\_\_\_  
Glenn Roberts  
Vice President

08/30/07

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

URS Corporation  
1750 Front Street, Suite 100  
Boise, Idaho 83702

