

C O P Y

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August 19, 1971

R. E. Corcoran
1069 State Office Building
Portland, Oregon 97201

Dear Andy:

I visited the Oregon Calcite Corporation marble deposit and mill site near Oregon Caves last Monday; at which time I met and talked with Mr. Jack Booher, Field Superintendent for California Time Petroleum, Inc. I took several pictures (color slides) of the quarry site, mill, Caves Highway, nearby logging sites, etc. I will forward copies of any pertinent pictures as soon as they are completed.

I would summarize the situation and their plans as follows:

1. The mill building is an existing structure erected about 1963 by E. W. Morris.
2. Oregon Calcite plans to install a small pilot kiln at the mill to test on the marble. The concrete foundation for this kiln has been poured.
3. Their initial testing would involve between 2,400 and 4,000 tons of marble. Mined at the rate of about 40 tons per day.
4. This production would be used to establish markets for possible future production.
5. If testing and marketing give desirable results a larger plant would be constructed on land near the railroad between Grants Pass and Merlin and the mining rate may increase to about 400 tons per day.
6. If results of test work are not encouraging and markets do not develop according to their expectations, no further mining will be done at the site for an indefinite period.
7. The quarry site is about 4,200 feet northeast of the Caves entrance and about 2,200 feet north of the monument boundary. It is on the south bank of Lake Creek at about the same elevation as the Caves.
8. There appears to be a large deposit of good grade marble which will contain near 98 percent CaCO_3 .
9. The rock has very little overburden and outcrops in steep bluffs.
10. There are six 20 acre (approx.) mining claims and one mill site situated north of the National Monument boundary. Four of the claims are against the north boundary (see enclosed sketch map).

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11. Two steep ridges and the canyon of Panther Creek are between the quarry site and Oregon Caves entrance.
12. Clear cut logging has been and is being done in the immediate area and one clear cut patch comes up to the west boundary of the National Monument.
13. The Forest Service reportedly withdrew from mineral entry in 1964, a $\frac{1}{4}$ mile buffer zone around the National Monument boundary on the west, south, and east sides. In section 9, T. 40 S., R. 6 W., the withdrawal area extends $\frac{1}{2}$ mile north of the boundary. In sec. 10 the N. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of the S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ and the S. $\frac{1}{2}$ of the N. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of the S.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ and the S. $\frac{1}{2}$ of the N.W. $\frac{1}{4}$ of the S.E. $\frac{1}{4}$ were withdrawn.
14. In April 1954 three lode claims were located by Morris, then amended to placer claims in May 1956 as the Lime Marble, Lime Marble No. 1, and Millsite; the Lime Marble No. 4, No. 5, and No. 6 and No. 7 legal subdivision placer claims, were located and recorded in Sept. 1962. In March 1965 that portion of his claims lying within the Forest Service Buffer Zone withdrawal was relinquished to the government.
15. We can see no cause for alarm regarding possibility of air or water pollution on the part of the proposed operation. As you can see from the pictures only the mill, which can be removed after the preliminary testing, is visible and only to the more observant tourist.
16. We also believe that the operation can be conducted so that blasting and trucking will not have an adverse effect on the tourism at Oregon Caves.

Sincerely,

Len Ramp
Resident GeologistLR:rp
Encl (1) Sketch map



900 S.W. 5TH AVENUE • PORTLAND, OREGON 97204 • 503-222-5561

November 29, 1971

Mr. Arnold M. Cogan, Member
Oregon Environmental Quality Commission
816 Pittock Block
Portland, Oregon 97205

Dear Arnold:

I have had the opportunity to speak with a number of people regarding the Oregon Calcite Corporation claims near the Oregon Caves National Monument and would like to pass on some of the information to you. To me, this situation serves as a good example of the way misunderstandings can develop because of lack of good communications. I wonder if the other commissioners believe as you do that the proposed quarry operation would be within the park close to the road leading to the Caves. Last Saturday, I made a field inspection of the claims to develop personal knowledge of the various factors involved, and I can assure you that a person would have to have x-ray eyes to see the mining operation. This can easily be confirmed by looking at the topographic map attached. It is true at the point indicated on the map that an experienced mountain traveler (one who dares lift his eyes from the twisty road) would see the few facilities for the pilot operation; but from my point of view, these structures are hardly noticeable through the trees.

I would like to briefly summarize the history of the monument boundaries and location of the claims:

1. In 1907 four sections of national forest service land were withdrawn, pending designation of the proposed Oregon Caves National Monument boundaries.
2. In 1909 the Oregon Caves National Monument was created by Presidential proclamation. The monument encompassed approximately one square mile of land/^{but} the withdrawal was never rescinded on the remainder of the original four sections.
3. The attached letter to Andy Corcoran, State Geologist, from Len Ramp, resident geologist in the Grants Pass office, summarizes claim location and mining operations. It is interesting to me that a buffer zone has already been created around the Oregon Caves National Monument.

From what I can gather, company officials indicated complete cooperation in complying with environmental control regulations; and, in fact, at one time the DEQ gave them a clean bill of health. If the air and water quality standards were met, I know that noise and traffic

congestion could be controlled by conducting these operations at night. At a site such as this, I am certain no more than one blast per night would be required. My considerable experience with the use of explosives in heavy construction gives me sufficient confidence to state without equivocation that blasting would in no way damage any of the Cave structures.

I suspect that much of this difficulty would have been avoided had the various parties involved acted more prudently. Unfortunately, the mining game is filled with "lots of characters", and I haven't met one of the "independents" yet who could resist bragging about his properties. If the testing operations had been completed, prior to all the ruckus, and the value of the deposit ascertained and markets developed, I think this whole matter would have washed out to everyone's satisfaction. Now the fat is in the fire and the operators don't know for sure whether or not the marble deposit is worth going to court for. This all gets back to one basic question which should be resolved and which, if resolved, in my opinion, would totally negate the need for the proposed environmental standards and the assertion of the DEQ in regard to public lands. This question is, do federal agencies have adequate authority to control mining operations or other legal, private interests within or without public lands?. If federal agencies do have the authority, there is definitely no need for further regulations. If the USFS, BLM, the State Department of Forestry and others do not have sufficient authority, in my opinion, it would be a proper role of the DEQ and industry to support measures which would provide this authority.

There is quite a bit of logging that has been done immediately adjacent to the park boundary and around the Rogue River National Forest, and I personally think it would be to the best interest of the public if they could observe the utilization of another natural resource--in this case marble-- and at the same time enjoy the scenic, aesthetic qualities of the forest land and the beauty of the caves of the national monument. After all, they should learn that it does require the utilization of our natural resources to provide the products they need and demand, and it would be beneficial for them to become personally acquainted with the harvesting and mining operations. This would be particularly beneficial to demonstrate that resources can be utilized in a manner that does not detract unduly from the natural environment.

I must say that the initial efforts by Oregon Calcite leave a lot to be desired in the way of housekeeping, but I am sure that they would gladly comply if allowed to operate. At any rate, their rights in this area seem to be down the drain and of no further concern, but the principle still remains, and it is entirely likely that other claims could be filed in the future outside of the existing buffer zone but in the sight of visitors to the Oregon Caves.

Very truly yours,

Ronald G. Nutting
Corporate Representative - Northwest



GEORGIA-PACIFIC CORPORATION

From the desk of

RON NUTTING

November 30, 1971

To: Len Ramp

Thanks for the information and loan of materials,
Len.

I'm enclosing a copy of my letter to Cogan for
your amusement. Also a copy of the proposed standards
that resulted from all the furor.

Ron