

May 29, 2007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Dear Editor,

As Executive Director of Friends of the Eel River, my responsibility is to do everything in my power to help preserve and defend the water quality of the Wild and Scenic Eel River, an incredible environmental resource for all of northern California. Evergreen Natural Resources, one of the partners of NWP, has applied for a mining permit from Trinity County, to annually quarry 6 million tons of ore at a site adjacent to the river. Their plan calls for leveling a mountain over time. The ore is not accessible by truck and will be hauled by Northwestern Pacific Co. (NWP) as stated in their business plan which used to be on the NCRA's website. It is now being put up on [www.eelriver.org](http://www.eelriver.org), under NCRA trains.

John Williams is NWP President. His letter raises many questions that residents of Novato and elsewhere should be asking.

- Why would Mr. Williams claim Roger Green, President of Evergreen Natural Resources, is not on the NWP Board when NWP's October 2006 Business Plan states that he is?
- Why would he claim there are only a few trains per week the NWP will operate when hauling the ore from the quarry will take – by my calculations – at least 10 roundtrip trains with 25 cars each a day?
- Why would Mr. Williams not even mention the quarry when the vast majority of the revenues from freight operations is tied to the quarry, and not Sonoma County's garbage? The North Coast Railway Authority (NCRA) is a public agency. It is supposed to look after taxpayer funds. Yet, according to a recent audit by Caltrans, the NCRA is considered to be a "high-risk" agency "due to its history of financial instability, history of unsatisfactory performance, failure to conform to the terms and conditions of previous awards and noncompliance with the management standards set forth in CFR 49 Part 18." The NCRA owns land adjacent to what is being called the Island Mountain Quarry which is being touted as the 15% the NCRA owns of a non-existent mine. NCRA awarded the freight operating license to NWP, an entity on which Mr. Green sits. I'd like to know, who's looking after the taxpayer interest?

If Island Mountain Quarry is approved, the freight trains will be long, move slowly, and many will run at night. The NCRA is required to do an EIR. It's time to get your local city council involved and insist that ALL of the train traffic is evaluated, not just the few Mr. Williams cites as being connected to moving Sonoma County garbage.