



## Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota

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**Members of the House:** Sheldon Johnson (DFL – 67B) – Chair; Mike Benson (R – 26B) **Members of the Senate:** David Senjem (R – 29); Patricia Torres Ray (DFL – 62) **State Agency Appointees:** Paul Hugunin – Agriculture, Scott Bradley – Transportation, Adam Johnson – Explore Minnesota Tourism, Keith Parker – Natural Resources, Andrea Kajer – Historical Society **Regional Appointees:** Nancy Salminen – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids, John Schaubach – Grand Rapids to Brainerd, Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River, Cordelia Pierson – Elk River to Hastings, Sheronne Mulry – Hastings to Iowa Border **Member at Large:** Mark Anderson

November 20, 2013

Great River Road Hastings to Iowa Border Region – Cities, Counties and Townships

### **Re: Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota Resolution 2013-01**

The Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota recently adopted a resolution urging the development of proper procedures and regulation in siting and operation of silica sand mining and processing facilities in the Great River Road National Scenic Byway Corridor of southeastern Minnesota. The resolution is attached.

Commission meeting information and materials, including reference materials used in development of the attached resolution, are available at <http://www.commissions.leg.state.mn.us/mrpc/mrpc.html>. Follow the link and then click on the meetings tab. Information about the Minnesota Great Road is available at [www.mnmississippiriver.com](http://www.mnmississippiriver.com).

If you have questions or would like additional details about the Commission or Great River Road National Scenic Byway, please contact the Mississippi River Parkway Commission of MN office by phone at 651-341-4196 or by email at [chris@togpartners.com](mailto:chris@togpartners.com).

Sincerely,

Rep. Sheldon Johnson, Chair

cc: Minnesota Environmental Quality Board  
League of Minnesota Cities  
Association of Minnesota Counties  
Minnesota Association of Townships

**Urging the development of proper procedures and regulation in siting and operation of silica sand mining and processing facilities in the Great River Road National Scenic Byway Corridor of southeastern Minnesota**

*Whereas* the statutory role of the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission, established under Minnesota Statute 161.1419, is to work toward the planning, construction, maintenance, and improvement of the Great River Road or Mississippi River Parkway and

*Whereas* the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission mission is to promote, preserve, and enhance the resources of the Mississippi River Valley and to develop the highways and amenities of the Great River Road (National Scenic Byway) and

*Whereas* the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission promotes, supports, and advances actions, responsibilities, procedures, controls, operational practices, and strategies to maintain the intrinsic archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and scenic qualities that support National Scenic Byway designation and

*Whereas* in response to input and requests from stakeholders the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission passed a motion to draft a resolution related to its mission and byway intrinsic qualities and

*Whereas* there has been an identified need for more guidance in the approval process and oversight in affected counties and local governments and

*Whereas* silica sand operations create concern over potential negative effects; e.g. air & water quality, public health, traffic flow & safety, highway & bridge quality, property value, and aesthetic qualities within the region (all affecting tourism and community quality of life) and the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission supports the efforts of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board and

*Whereas* the potential for silica sand jobs and an economic boom within the Great River Road corridor are significant, there is also the potential for significant adverse economic impacts to the Great River Road's tourism industry and

*Whereas* the value of the land and silica sand resources are significant for owners as are profits for the mining industries

***Therefore be it resolved,*** that

The Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission encourages local units of government to refer to and work with the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board Silica Sand Technical Assistance Team and

The Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission supports zoning ordinances and other land use practices that protect the archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities of the Great River Road National Scenic Byway and the Mississippi River.