

11/11/13  
Sheldon Johnson, Chairman  
Mississippi River Parkway Commission  
72 State Office Building  
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Mr. Johnson,

Citizens of Southeastern Minnesota in the counties of Goodhue, Wabasha, Winona, Houston and Fillmore have been very active in the frac sand issues for the last two and a half years. We have been lobbying with local, county and state government to protect our region's beauty, natural resources, tourism, and the health, safety and welfare of our residents. One of our concerns is the protecting the beauty and economic vitality of the tourism along the Great River Road.

We are aware of the upcoming MRPC meeting scheduled for November 14<sup>th</sup>, at which a resolution # 2013-01 will be proposed to address this issue. Although the resolution has good intent, our concern is that the resolution is not forceful enough in its direction to help those us working for strong standards at the local level. Also, we feel it is premature to promote the technical team which has yet to appointed and so we do not know how effective it will be at this juncture.

We would urge you to adopt a statement that clearly supports local ordinances that ban or create strong regulation of frac sand mining development within and along the Great River Road. Attached is our suggested language.

Several of us will be attending the meeting and testifying to these concerns. Please distribute this to other members of the Commission.

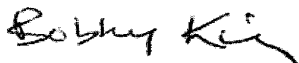
Sincerely,



Jody McIlrath

Chair, Save-The-Bluffs, Goodhue County  
Florence Township Planning Commissioner

Bobby King



Land Stewardship Project

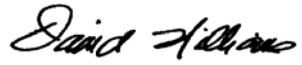
Lynn Schoen, Wabasha City Council Member



Tracy Sides, Owner, Bravely Be Inc.



David Williams

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Williams". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Fillmore County

Kelly Stange

Donna Buckbee

Houston County Protectors

Jim Gurley

Winona County

Jeanne Petig

Friends of Wabasha

CC: Members of the MRPC

Proposed alternative language for a resolution showing changes.

Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota

Resolution 2013-01

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

Whereas the statutory role of the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MN MRPC), 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 MN MRPC 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 MN MRPC 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 MN MRPC 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 MN MRPC supports the efforts of the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board (EQB) and

Whereas the experience with mining in Wisconsin has clearly shown the negative impact of silica sand mining and related development include polluted air and water, damaged roads, and dramatic increase in truck traffic;

Whereas the potential for ~~silica sand jobs and a silica sand "gold rush" n economic boom~~ within the Great River Road corridor is possible and this would are significant, there is also the potential for significant\_ adversely impacte the-important 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 MN MRPC encourages local units of government to refer to and work with the EQB Silica Sand Technical Assistance Team and~~

The MN MRPC supports city, county and township zoning ordinances that ban or set restrictions on silica sand mining, processing and transloading ~~and other land use practices that in order to~~ protect the archaeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities of the Great River Road National Scenic Byway and the Mississippi River.

The MN MRPC supports the Environmental Quality Board developing model standards to help communities achieve these goals and encourages local units of government to utilize the resources available through the EQB.

Adopted \_\_\_\_\_

Date

Dear Chairman Johnson and Commissioners:

From the [front page of your website](#):

*"The Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MN-MRPC) is a statutory Commission whose mission is:*

*To preserve, promote and enhance the scenic, historic and recreational resources of the Mississippi River, to foster economic growth in the corridor and to develop the national, scenic and historic byway known as the Great River Road."*

This is to encourage the Commission to pass a strong resolution, at today's meeting, relating to the control of "frac sand" mining processing, storage, and transport in the Great River Road National Scenic Byway Corridor. One has only to visit various area on the Wisconsin side of the River to see that large-scale frac sand activities, unless effectively regulated, pose a grave threat to the qualities that make the Corridor so attractive to visitors and residents. Therefore, it is important that the Commission take a strong and clear stand. The threat to the Great River Road is potentially so severe that I hope the MRPC will support a ban of frac sand mining activities, including over-the-road transport, in the viewscapes of the Byway Corridor.

I recognize that "economic development" is one of the charges of the Commission, and some might argue that frac sand mining is a form of such development. But, it seems well enough demonstrated that frac sand mining is not likely to have a net, overall economic benefit to the areas in which it occurs, primarily because the damage to natural resources, esthetics, and quality of life exceeds any benefits.

I endorse the views of Save the Bluffs in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Muller

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