

City of Sugar City
Post Office Box 56 --10 East Center
Sugar City, Idaho 83448

Support our local businesses

Glenn W. Dalling, Mayor
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October 4, 2007

Madison County Commission
134 E. Main Street – P.O. Box 389
Rexburg, Idaho 83440

Dear Commissioners:

As you may know, the mayors and councils of Sugar City and Teton City joined hundreds of citizens of Madison County in vigorously opposing the proposed gravel pit east of Sugar City on 3000 North. Both cities felt that a gravel pit at this location would not only detract from the beauty and peace of their communities but also threaten the safety of their residents and the quality of their roads by significantly increasing truck traffic. Such an operation close by could even jeopardize the future growth of their cities by limiting expansion opportunities.

When the developer withdrew his application for the project, we were all pleased but we knew the issue of gravel pits had not been settled. In fact, this proposal and the overwhelming opposition to it have brought the issue clearly into focus. Madison County has 11 active and 18 inactive gravel pits in or just outside the county, with developers proposing four more. Gravel pits by their nature are eyesores and asphalt hot-mix plants are dirty, noisy operations. That puts the beauty and tranquility of our community in danger. Just as serious, our water supplies are threatened by developers who may want to transfer water rights outside the county.

We call upon you as our county commissioners for help. We feel you should regulate gravel pit approval, operation and reclamation, and ensure that owners of these operations follow through on their commitments to maintain and reclaim them. We also feel you should limit the number of new gravel pits and asphalt hot-mix plants that you approve, recognizing that ample gravel sources are already available.

We feel strongly that you should protect productive farms and ranches from the encroachment of such operations. We call your attention to an important responsibility of local government, as set forth in Idaho Code 67-6502, to protect prime agricultural land and recreation resources. In keeping with this statute, the Madison County Comprehensive Plan states county objectives to “preserve the agricultural land as much as possible outside of incorporated city limits” (p. 39) and to keep the environment “as natural and enjoyable as possible” (p. 57). Our own comprehensive plans

call for preserving and enhancing the environment, even creating aesthetically pleasing communities.

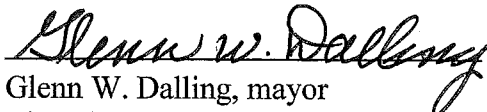
In view of these legal requirements, allowing gravel pits that destroy beautiful and productive farmland in peaceful country settings is problematic, particularly given the existing gravel pits nearby that are far from depleted.

Thank you for your service in leading our county. We know your job requires that you consider the conflicting interests of all Madison County residents. However, for the good of the community at large, we believe you should establish strict requirements to govern gravel pits and asphalt hot-mix plants and then consistently enforce them.

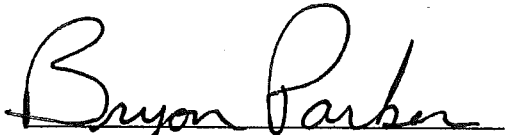
In making this request, we humbly claim not only our authority as municipal leaders in the county but also the extraterritorial authority granted us in Idaho Code 50-606.

On behalf of our City Councils, Planning and Zoning Commissions and residents, please place this matter high on your priority list. We submit that a community's appearance, atmosphere and water supplies have long-term consequences.

Respectfully,


Glenn W. Dalling, mayor
City of Sugar City, Idaho

10-12-07
Date


Bryon Parker, mayor
City of Teton, Idaho

10-12-07
Date

cc: Madison County Planning and Zoning Commission
Rexburg City Council and Planning and Zoning Commission
Sugar City Planning and Zoning Commission
Teton City Planning and Zoning Commission