

Check All Costs Before Allowing Gravel Mines

Letter To The Editor

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Can Sunny Valley Sand & Gravel ensure that their gravel pits make both environmental and economic sense for everyone? To do that I would like to see new policies set up by planning that would require aggregate operators to do full cost accounting when evaluating the economic viability of a proposed operation like this.

Full cost accounting means accounting that recognizes all economic, environmental, health, and social costs of an action or decision. This includes negative impacts on property values and way of life we value here in Sunny Valley. Aggregate operations are not a public service, they are private, for-profit businesses. Local residents and municipalities should not be forced to financially subsidize this business so they can make huge profits. I recognize that gravel is an important resource for infrastructure development, construction, and to some extent for job creation. I believe that aggregate operations should not be conducted at a net cost to society; they should provide a net benefit once all environmental and economic costs are calculated. The last question is, Do we really need more gravel pits in Josephine County? Answer is no.

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