

Not Enough Water To Support Aggregate Mine

Letter To The Editor

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Life depends on water. Animals need it. Plants need it. We need it. Unfortunately for the residents of Sunny Valley and, ultimately, the Rogue River, so does the proposed aggregate mine making headlines these days.

The mine requires water for processing rock and to suppress toxic dust that arises from said processing.

There is not enough water available in Sunny Valley at any time of year for Sunny Valley Sand & Gravel to operate without having a negative impact. The number and types of water permits that they have tried to pass through the Oregon Department of Water Resources are too complicated to explain here.

Their latest water tactic involves a series of ponds to be lined with clay or fabric liners. Water to fill these would be taken from Grave Creek January through March.

Typical of peak summer months before the current drought, January 2014 Grave Creek experienced a no flow. And evaporation alone would be more water than neighboring properties use collectively. It is anyone's guess where water would come from to fill these ponds.

By their own consultants' studies SVS&G would impact neighboring wells. Grave Creek and Shanks Creek, both of which are spawning tributary to the Rogue River, run through the SVS&G property. The owners have already shown disrespect for laws that protect those creeks. Any foothold regarding water rights would mean putting rocks above life. Soon we will see which our county commissioners value more.

WAYNE SMITH

Sunny Valley