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Silica Sand Mining in Wisconsin Study Update

WHEREAS, silica sand mining in Wisconsin continues to grow and will impact thousands of acres of Wisconsin's landscape; and,

WHEREAS, the WDNR report on Silica Sand Mining in Wisconsin was completed in January 2012 and should be updated and expanded to include the most current information available; and,

WHEREAS, silica sand mining is particularly concentrated in West Central Wisconsin and the WDNR report does not include a technical analysis of the potential cumulative impacts of the loss of open space, wooded hills as water filters, air quality, or wildlife habitat, nor does the report specify a process by which WDNR will consider such cumulative impacts; and,

WHEREAS, the WDNR report provides no technical evaluation of the long-term impacts that silica sand mining and related activities have on the character, productivity, and future use of soils.

BE IT RESOLVED, that the WDNR partner with other State and Federal agencies to conduct an independent evaluation of silica sand mining in Wisconsin, which includes: opportunities for local official and public participation; lessons learned from recent mine violations in Wisconsin; monitoring and regulatory approaches from Iowa and Minnesota; a technical analysis of the cumulative and long-term environmental and soil impacts; and an expanded discussion of non-environmental impacts (e.g., archeological, tourism economy, nearby property values). The report shall also include recommended best practices for the planning, regulating, and monitoring of silica sand operations, including the cumulative impacts of such operations, for use by State, county, local, and tribal governments.

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