24-03-15

RESOLUTION: MORATORIUM ON NEW STATE PERMITS FOR FRAC SAND MINING AND PROCESSING

The DNR states Frac Sand mining and processing sites now number more than 150 in 2015 versus fewer than 6 only 5 years ago. DNR states that the "footprint" of these operations can be up to 5,000 acres and the industry could grow 200% larger than current production. The continued explosive growth of this industry threatens public health and safety, property values and dramatically changes our landscape due to loss of wildlife habitat, scenic bluffs and farmlands.

Frac Sand mining and processing sites are not required to conduct air sampling for dangerous air impacts including the smallest particulates that can cause cancer-causing silicosis. These operations may cause surface and groundwater pollution from acid mine drainage and chemicals used to wash sand. Several operations have been found in noncompliance of state law and/or have caused pollution when ponds overflowed. They also impact wetlands, groundwater, threatened and endangered species, and turn peaceful rural areas into noisy, dusty, dangerous industrial zones.

A citizen petition citing serious concerns about the explosive growth of frac sand mining led to the Natural Resources Board's recent unanimous vote to publish a Strategic Analysis of Frac Sand mining by early 2016. The Board agreed that this comprehensive scientific study of environmental and public health impacts was necessary to inform future decision-making on regulation of the industry.

RESOLVED, the Conservation Congress supports a moratorium on the issuance of new state Frac Sand mining and processing permits by the DNR until recommendations from the DNR Strategic Analysis can be implemented.

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