

October 13, 2016

Winona County Board of Commissioners
177 Main St
Winona, MN 55987

Dear Commissioners,

We, the undersigned groups, organizations, and businesses active in Winona County, urge you to ban any new frac sand mining, processing, or transportation operations in Winona County by passing an amendment to the zoning ordinance. The long-established purpose of zoning is to protect the community's health, safety, and welfare, and Minnesota state law explicitly grants counties this authority.

A ban is necessary for a variety of reasons, including the following:

Winona County's karst topography makes our groundwater highly vulnerable to contamination. Industrial-scale mining and chemical processing operations threaten the safety of drinking water for people and livestock. Mining would also threaten surface waters, including the exceptional trout streams for which Winona County is widely known.

Frac sand development is incompatible with agriculture. Once mined, land becomes unusable for years or decades. It also drives land costs artificially, out of reach of young farmers seeking land.

Winona County's natural beauty, wide diversity of animal and plant species, and abundant opportunities for outdoor recreation attract thousands of visitors who generate significant economic activity. This beauty also lends appeal as our area grows as an arts and cultural destination. These important and sustainable assets must be protected for our future generations to enjoy.

Frac sand mines generate hundreds of truck trips daily. This creates a safety risk on rural roads, and will necessitate frequent, costly repairs on our overburdened roads.

Noise, light, dust, traffic, and other forms of pollution generated by frac sand operations diminish the rights of neighboring residents to use and enjoy their own property. The industrialization of rural areas brought about by frac sand development irrevocably harms rural quality of life and negatively impacts the value of neighboring properties.

Silica dust is a known health hazard. There has been little study of silica operations of this scale, or the effects on neighbors' health, particularly on vulnerable populations. Winona County must take a precautionary approach to protect residents from this potential risk.

Regulation has proven inadequate in protecting residents and the environment from the harmful impacts of frac sand operations. Permitting, monitoring, and enforcement would

take up an enormous amount of time for our elected and appointed officials, require additional planning staff and ultimately become a burden to the taxpayers.

Frac sand mining will not provide sustained jobs or prosperity because of the volatility of the fossil fuel industry. It would harm Winona County's more sustainable economic activities including agriculture, recreation, and tourism.

Winona County's Comprehensive Plan supports promoting agriculture with sound conservation practices and stewardship of the land, and protecting our natural resources. Frac sand mining is incompatible with these goals and values.

Therefore, we ask that the Winona County Board of Commissioners amend the zoning ordinance to prohibit any new frac sand operations in Winona County's jurisdiction.


Sincerely,

Architectural Environments and Robert J. Hurt Landscape Photography

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert J. Hurt", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert J. Hurt, owner

Arly's Towing

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Arly Hamm", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Arly Hamm, owner

Big Valley Ranch, Inc.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gayle Goetzman", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Gayle Goetzman, President/owner

Bill Heim Farms

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill Heim", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bill Heim, owner

Blue Fruit Farm

Joyce E. Ford

Jim Riddle

Joyce Ford & Jim Riddle, owners

Blue Heron Coffeehouse

Larry Wolner
Colleen Wolner

Larry & Colleen Wolner, owners

Bluff Country Co-op

Ann Lichliter

Ann Lichliter, President

Brosig Family Farm

Kathryn Brosig


Kathryn Brosig, CFO

Butler's Handyman Service

Ibrahim J. Butler

Ibrahim Butler, owner

Cathy Groebner Artist & House Cleaning, St. Charles



Cathy Groebner, owner

Cedar Tree Studio



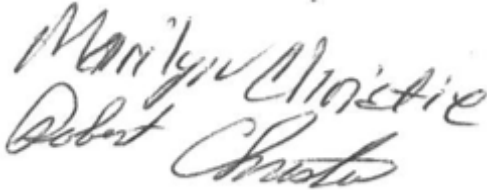
Jack Honeywell, artist/owner

Chapter 2 Books



Daryl Lanz, owner

Christie Family Farm



Marilyn & Robert Christie, owners

Citizens Against Silica Mining (CASM)



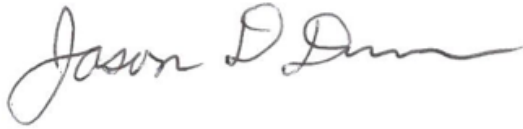
Jane Cowgill, for the group

Classical Homeopathy



JoAnn Thomas, owner

Computer Dock



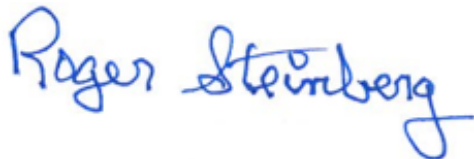
Jason Dicus, owner

Earth-Be-Glad Farm



Jennifer & Mike Rupperecht, owners

Friends of Whitewater State Park, Board of Directors



Roger Steinberg, President

Girl Friday 916



Lisa Stokes & Scott Hagberg, owners

Health Well of Winona



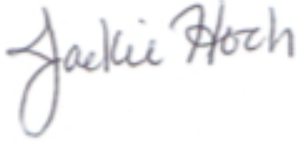
Lyn Horness, owner

Hiawatha Valley Audubon Society



Scott Lowery, Program Coordinator

Hoch Orchard and Gardens



Jackie Hoch, co-owner

Integrative Health Care of Winona



Dr. Karen Vrchota, MD, owner

Izaak Walton League of America (Will Dilg Chapter)



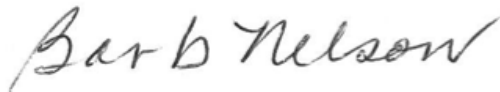
Barry Drazkowski, for the group

Kari Yearous Photography, LLC




Kari Yearous, owner

Land Stewardship Project



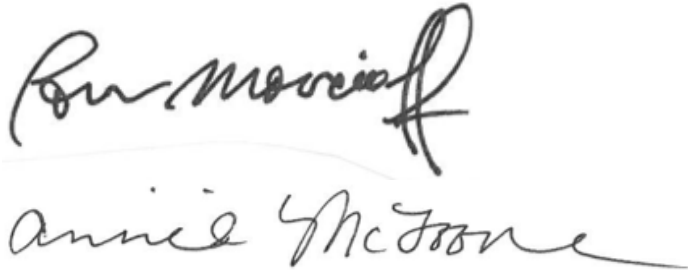
Barb Nelson, Winona County Organizing Committee Member

Margaret Heim Farm



Margaret Heim, owner

McLooney Tunes Productions



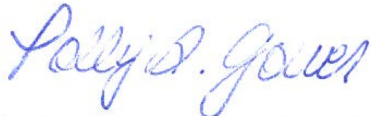
Tom Moncrieff, engineer/producer & Annie McLoone, producer/owner

The Medical Practice of Dr. Mark Martin, Winona



Dr. Mark Martin, DO, owner

Mississippi River Revival



Polly Gower, President

MuddyRiverPhotography.com




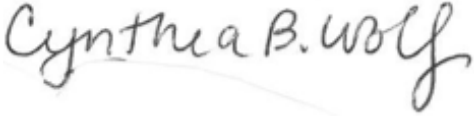
Al Mueller, owner

Nelson Organic Dairy LLC (Flavor Ridge Farm)



LaVerne & Arlene Nelson, owners

O'Neill Family Farm

Kelley O'Neill & Cynthia Wolf, owners

Paperbacks & Pieces



Shelley Olsen, owner

Pork & Plants Heritage Farm



Ann Kreidermacher, owner

Pork & Plants LLC



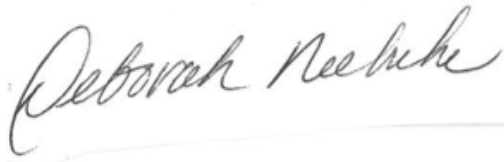
Maria Kreidermacher, owner

Prairie Moon Nursery



Gail Testor, co-owner

Relaxation Zone



Deborah Niebuhr, CEO

Roberts' Seven Seas Painting



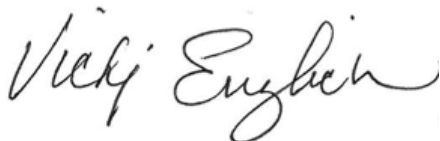
Hywel Taff Roberts, owner

Shari Schuh Painting, LLC



Shari Schuh, owner

Winona Area Pollinators



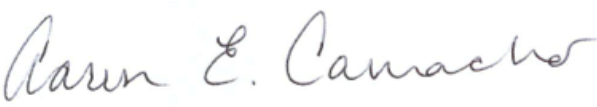
Vicki English, for the organization

Winona Catholic Worker



Diane Leutgeb Munson, for the group

Winona-Dakota Unity Alliance



Aaron E. Camacho, President

Wisoy Valley Community Land Cooperative

Roger Dahlin

Roger Dahlin, President

Wolf Hill Farm

Car Schik

Chris

Emma Iremonger

Caroline van Schaik & Christopher & Emma Iremonger, owners

Zephyr Valley Community Co-op

Theresa Zeman

Theresa Zeman, President