

NATIONAL STONE, SAND & GRAVEL ASSOCIATION



Natural building blocks for quality of life

April 22, 2009

Dear Member of Congress:

Earth Day is an excellent time to reflect on the wonders of nature and assess how our actions, as individuals and businesses, impact the earth. The members of the National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association (NSSGA) recognize that the earth's resources, upon which all life depends, are finite, and that wise environmental stewardship and sustainable practices are necessary to preserve American's quality of life for future generations. The industry's adoption of sustainability principles demonstrates our care for people, our care for the environment and our care for making products that help build American's economy.

The quality of life Americans' enjoy depends on the natural building blocks of crushed stone, sand and gravel as the entire built environment rests on these three products. Environmentally beneficial uses of our products include erosion control, flue-gas desulpherization, stormwater drainage, neutralization of acidity of waters or farmland, and our products are necessary for water and sewage treatment, wind farms, rail beds, schools, roads, homes and hospitals. There is, however, an effort underway to expand the jurisdiction of the Clean Water Act (CWA) that if successful could impact our ability to provide the aggregates necessary for the built environment by imposing costly new regulations on an already heavily regulated industry at the federal, state and local levels.

Since the Clean Water Act (CWA) was enacted in 1972 the health of our nation's rivers and streams has dramatically improved. For decades the federal government has worked in partnership with the states to achieve the goals of the CWA. Through this partnership the federal government sets the standards and the states implement them.

NSSGA shares the goal of an effective Clean Water Act, and urges Congress to assure adherence to three important values of the law. First, retain the federal-state partnership that has produced so much success. Second, as called for since 1972 by the regulated community and even the Supreme Court, define key terms like "tributary," "adjacent," and "impoundment." Finally, regulations implementing the law should be clear and understandable to an ordinary person, which will go a long way in helping improve compliance.

NSSGA's member companies produce 90 percent of the crushed stone and more than 70 percent of the sand and gravel consumed annually in the U.S. Aggregates are the largest component of asphalt and concrete. More than 3 billion tons of aggregates were produced in 2007 at a value of approximately \$21 billion, contributing nearly \$38 billion annually to the GDP of the United States and each year it increases. With over 11,000 operations nationwide and a workforce of more than 118,000 men and women, most Congressional Districts are home to multiple aggregate operations.

If you have any questions, or would like more information on how aggregate operations are working to serve and protect the environment, please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Joy Wilson".

Jennifer Joy Wilson
President & CEO

ENVIRONMENTAL USES AND BENEFITS OF STONE, SAND & GRAVEL

Aggregates are employed throughout the country wherever any type of building or public works construction activity takes place. The physical, chemical and mechanical properties of aggregates make them an ideal construction material for a wide variety of uses.

Erosion Control & Slope Protection

- Dams
- Roadways and bridges
- Shorelines and navigation channels
- Rivers and stream banks
- Runoff control at construction sites
- Wetland and stream restoration

Filtration

- Sewage treatment
- Wastewater control
- Septic tank leaching fields
- Infiltration for aquifer replenishment

Acid Neutralization

- Streams
- Lakes
- Agricultural land
- Reclamation of Mine Sites
- Habitat creation and maintenance
- Backfill
- Land cover

Landfills & Waste Disposal

- Leachate and gas collection layers
- Covers and protection
- Leachate pH adjustment

Concrete and Asphalt Construction for Public Works Infrastructure

- Sewage treatment plants
- Water purification plants
- Incinerators and recycling facilities
- Dams, reservoirs and water supply
- Utility lines

Coal Mine Dusting to Prevent Explosions

- Non-combustible limestone

Flue Gas Desulfurization

- SO₂ reduction using limestone
[crushed limestone is used in scrubbers to remove sulfur dioxide from emissions]