



NATIONAL STONE, SAND
& GRAVEL ASSOCIATION

May 24, 2023

The Honorable Bruce Westerman
Chairman
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building

The Honorable Raúl Grijalva
Ranking Member
House Committee on Natural Resources
1324 Longworth House Office Building

Dear Chairman Westerman and Ranking Member Grijalva,

On behalf of the 450 members of the National Sand, Stone & Gravel Association (NSSGA), we write to share our support for H.R. 3397, a bill to require the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to withdraw their newly proposed rule entitled “Conservation and Landscape Health” (88 Fed. Reg. 19583 (April 3, 2023)). This legislation provides certainty to aggregate producers, as BLM’s proposed rule would dramatically shift how public lands will be managed.

NSSGA represents the aggregates and industrial sand industry of our country, with over 9,000 facilities and more than 100,000 employees in high-paying jobs. This industry procures 2.5 billion tons of aggregates annually, which are crucial in sustaining our lifestyle and constructing our nation's infrastructure and communities. The products sourced by this industry are fundamental components required for building roads, airports, transit, rail, ports, clean water and energy networks.

If the proposed rule is adopted, access to public lands for all purposes, including energy, material development, grazing, forest management and recreation would become more difficult, bringing substantial and adverse modifications to the Bureau's management approach for the 245 million acres of land under its supervision. For the aggregates industry, the process of sourcing and supplying materials used to create building blocks for our nation does not need to be more stringent, and this rule will significantly impact our ability to access needed construction materials for infrastructure projects. As America begins to rebuild our aging infrastructure, the aggregates industry needs continual support rather than forced limitations.

NSSGA supports policies that properly outline ways to best maintain our country’s ecosystems and wildlife habitats. However, the proposed rule limits local land managers' capacity to conserve areas in need. It is crucial that local farmers, ranchers, hunters, miners and community stakeholders have their voices heard when implementing broad regulatory changes, as they know their land and local ecosystems best and will provide the most efficient ideas for finding a path to long-term conservation. The adoption of this rule severely cuts out any local voices and grants too much decision-making power



to BLM. We urge Congress to work with BLM to ensure that cooperation with local patrons is at the top of the priority list when altering any laws to deal with conservation efforts.

We hope Congress will vote to remove this burdensome overreach of BLM and work alongside community stakeholders to reach lasting sustainability goals without limiting the future potential of multiple industries that rely heavily on public land use.

Please reach out to my office should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Johnson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael W. Johnson
President & CEO
National Stone, Sand & Gravel Association

