As an industry that works directly with the earth on a day-to-day basis, aggregate operators have a keen appreciation for the value of sustainable operations, which is why sustainable practices are found at every step of the quarrying process.

WATER
Water is a critical component for processing aggregates because fine dust particles need to be washed off the crushed stone. Rather than drawing from municipal sources, aggregate facilities maintain water onsite and reuse the same supply repeatedly.

RESOURCES
Everything from batteries, plastic containers, scrap metal, motor oil and more is recycled at aggregate facilities. The materials themselves are also recycled. Concrete and recycled asphalt product (RAP) find a second life, as does rock dust created during processing (called fines). Historically fines were considered waste products, but today they are used to amend agricultural soils and create high-quality compost in addition to road-base or fill material.

Did You Know?
Aggregate processing is chemical-free. Rocks are crushed, screened to the proper size and washed using just water – almost all of which is recycled and reused onsite.

ENERGY
Many facilities are utilizing clean energy options like solar, wind and electric to power their operations and some have installed turbines and solar panels onsite. The industry is also cutting down on energy usage in big ways, like installing energy-efficient crushers and investing in new high-performance mobile equipment, and little ways too, like switching to LED lightbulbs and purchasing electric trucks for light duty vehicles—because every watt counts.

LAND
Only a portion of land in the aggregates industry is directly mined. Thousands of acres owned by operators are preserved or restored to promote biodiversity and many targeted projects take place every year like planting pollinator gardens or installing nests or habitat for specific threatened or endangered species.

RECLAMATION
Just like the materials extracted from it, the life of a quarry is circular. Aggregate pits are ultimately reclaimed and given a new life, often as natural areas like ponds, wetlands or upland forests, all of which are planted with native species and trees that aid in carbon sequestration.