

**PUBLIC HEARING VERBAL TESTIMONY**

**PUBLIC INFORMATION HEARING**

**DRT Sands, Inc.**

**3/31/15**

*Louise Cody, 21851 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Bloomer, WI 54724*

I'm Louise Cody and I live on 27<sup>th</sup> Street in Bloomer, right next to the mine site.

The reclamation plans for DRT Sands and the other nonmetallic mines in Chippewa County state that the mining will occur in phases and that reclamation will be done on a continual basis. It states that the amount of land opened up is based on market demand for the sand. However, since the mines in Chippewa County are clustered in a concentrated area, there is a great likelihood of an extensive amount of land being opened up during a boom in demand. In addition, a boom in demand would likely reduce reclamation efforts by the companies. Because I live in the center of the mining district, I am greatly concerned with the hazards of having so many acres exposed and being mined at once. I would like to see a limit on the amount of acres that can be open at one time. Reclamation needs to be completed based on the health, safety, and welfare of the residents living in the area and not on based on market demand. This is even more important with so many mines being permitted in a concentrated area. I would like DRT's reclamation plans to state a limit on the amount of acres open and that reclamation shall take place immediately when new phases are being mined.

In the water study being conducted by Chippewa County, it showed that reclaimed land does not see any decent measureable infiltration until around the 20-30 year mark. I think it is important to maintain and hold the land in reclamation to establish recharge, especially with such a clustered mining area and with such a large amount of acres being mined in northwest Chippewa County. My concern is that reclamation will be released too soon and the post-secondary land use will not have enough time to establish. I hope Chippewa County holds the reclamation to at least 20 years to establish a successful post-secondary land use and allow a significant recharge rate for our area's surface and groundwater. I know the County is currently working on standards, but something more specific should be included in DRT's reclamation to ensure successful reclamation.

After looking at the plan's map, I noticed that the wash plant of the mine site is located near the wetlands on the property and next to the flow to the Trout Creek. Also, the driveway lies directly on the flow line of the wetlands. I am concerned about unwanted materials from the wash plant and driveway leaving the mine site. The driveway should not restrict the water flow, and the wash plant should not be located so close to the wetlands and the water flow because of the increased risk of contaminants leaving the mine site.

Another area of concern is that the Chippewa County Forest is adjoining DRT's mine site along with other heavily forested land. Chippewa County is in part of the state that has issues with oak wilt. According to data on the WI DNR website, the risk of spreading oak wilt significantly increases around April 15 and then significantly decreases after July 15. I would like to see Chippewa County restrict forest clearing during this period to protect the forestland in this County. I personally have 15 acres of forest close to the site that is primarily made up of red oaks, which are highly susceptible to oak wilt. I would also like to see Chippewa County protect the use of their forest land by increasing the buffer area of DRT's mine site with the Chippewa County Forest. I think it is imperative for the safety of those using the land and to protect the Chippewa County Forest's land use.

Ben Dachel, 21515 Co. Hwy. DD, New Auburn, WI 54757

Ben Dachel, County Hwy DD, New Auburn. Fairly close to the proposed mine site of DRT.

According to the reclamation plan, the waste material from the wet processing plant is being used in the reclamation process. The waste material will have residue from the flocculants or other chemicals used at this site. Such byproducts such as acrylamides will be also present in those materials. Those water materials brought back for the reclamation. There needs to be monitoring of any of these chemicals that may be found in surface water which eventually make it back to the trout streams and groundwater far from the site. What will be done to mitigate this if these chemicals are found offsite?

Section 3.2.8 talks about the vegetation used as a screen from view of surrounding land uses. I want to make sure that the screening that is put up is not just seedlings. According to the site plan map, they are calling for seedlings along the driveway. If the purpose is to provide screenings, then the trees that need to be put in have to be some type of larger nursery stock or rapid growth trees.

The bonds that are collected to make sure the reclamation is done should not be released until a minimum of 10 years after DRT considers reclamation complete. We need to have some type of insurance that the plantings have taken hold and will remain viable. This performance period is critical to making sure that we are not left with fields of invasive weeds or nuisance plants.

I feel that the setback from the public land should be a much larger distance to preserve the integrity and purpose of the public county land. There are already two mines approved within a ½ mile of this public land. This will create stress on the habitat and an unenjoyable experience for anybody who chooses to use that recreation land for hunting, especially considering that these three mines can run 24/7.

The last point here is I'm including a document here from SCS engineering, which is a firm that our township, Town of Auburn, has hired to recommend additional protections for the township. I am asking that the County includes the extra monitoring wells, increase the frequency of the monitoring of the two additional wells, and expand the proposed list of groundwater analytical parameters that the firm has recommended. Included with this would be the memo from SCS Engineering with all the details.

Dr. Thomas Chisholm, 316 W Spruce Street, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729

My name is Thomas Chisholm. I am a retired military surgeon. I have lived here in Chippewa for the past ten years. Most of the time, I have been opposed to the mines. I don't speak with...yet in spite of my interest in it I am amazed by the quality of your remarks have been proved over the years compared to what little we knew about things in 2008.

So, I am concerned with everything that's removed. For instance, the topsoil. What does topsoil look like in 20 years? Is there any life in it? Let me just speak on behalf of the topsoil and everything else that's removed. You mentioned about replanting. It takes forever. Will the plants, will they grow? Will everything that lived in the area that's been removed return and when? In a few years, I'll be gone but the younger people will be around to see what happens. The mining will just metastasize. It seems to me that it has in the past few years. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.