



Montana State Legislature
MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Representative Scott Rosenzweig
House District 57

DURING THE SESSION
State Capitol Building
PO Box 200400
Helena MT 59620-0400
Phone: (406) 444-4800
Web: legmt.gov

COMMITTEES
Appropriations
Long Range Planning Subcommittee

HOME ADDRESS
PO Box 134
Bozeman MT 59771
(406) 599-0719
Scott.Rosenzweig@legmt.gov

RE: PROPOSED EMIGRANT GRAVEL LEASE

February 18, 2026

ATTN:

Montana State Land Board & Governor's Office (landboard@mt.gov, governor@mt.gov)
Park County Commissioners & Administrative Staff (mstory@parkcounty.org, bwells@parkcounty.org,
jvermillion@parkcounty.org, cahern@parkcounty.org)
DNRC & Director (DNRCEmigrantGravel@mt.gov, Amanda.Kaster@mt.gov)

Dear Members of the State Land Board, Park County Commission, and the DNRC,

Thank you for considering the following:

We recently became aware of the proposed lease of a large portion of a Section of public land (Section 22) in Park County to Riverside Contracting, Inc (Missoula), for the purpose of awarding a 20-year (10 years x 2) lease/permit for the creation of a new gravel and asphalt mine, along Highway 89 and adjacent to the Yellowstone River, near Emigrant.

We respectfully ask that you deny this request, for the following reasons, and with the following considerations:

- 1) Since the creation of these Montana public lands (Deer / Elk Hunt District 314), the State of Montana for many decades has been following the law and managing these public lands lawfully, allowing the Montana education system to be compensated for the value of recreation on these public lands, as is your mandate. Eliminating the people's right to recreational use of these public lands is the exact opposite of your mandate to responsibly manage Montana's public lands. Sacrificing this public land, which is used primarily for hunting, fishing, and hiking, for the purpose of a gravel and asphalt mine, is unwise and very likely to be unlawful. Unless you can prove somehow that these lands have been, and are being, mismanaged now and for the many decades that they have been under the stewardship of the entities in which you serve, there is no reasonable cause to approve this proposed permit for a gravel and asphalt mine.
- 2) There is no economic or reasonable local need for this gravel and asphalt mine – it is unnecessary for, and does not serve, the people of the Park County – and therefore a new gravel and asphalt pit will not be serving any “public” need. The current, undeveloped, public land does a better job of providing public benefit.
- 3) We do not support, nor should you, the assigning of public, government-owned resources (Section 22) to private companies (Riverside Contracting) to compete with and undermine local, private businesses that operate on their own private land.
- 4) In fact, there are already several existing gravel businesses in Park County that can sufficiently supply all the local gravel needs – locally, in volume, and likely for a good (better) price; this includes all current AND future needs for Park County's road maintenance, Route 89 maintenance and the reconstruction of the road into Yellowstone. Again – although this new gravel mine could supply gravel locally, there is absolutely no need for the taking of public land for the production of gravel and asphalt.



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- 5) Yellowstone National Park has stated that they have no need for any of this gravel in their upcoming road and infrastructure projects.
- 6) This land is a migration corridor for elk, pronghorn and deer. Many animals have been taken here over the years, and it is a local favorite because of its ease of access from Rt 89 and the Yellowstone River.
- 7) The introduction of this new gravel pit introduces a new level of danger to driving for tourists and residents on Route 89. Park County's safety and recovery budget is already stretched dangerously thin. More large industrial vehicles will tax the integrity of the roads, including Highway 89, and make an already dangerous stretch of roads even worse.
- 8) On behalf of Park County, we must note that Park County already suffers from the financial responsibility of supporting over a million tourists and other-Montana (non-Park County) vehicles heading to YNP every year, with practically no financial support from the state. As has been shared with us, this new gravel and asphalt plant is also intended to supply many projects outside of Park County – which means Park County will bear the underlying cost of the road damage and accidents caused by 20 years of Riverside's and their customers' trucks driving up and down Paradise Valley and through Livingston in order to supply projects outside of Park County and imposing an additional and unfunded burden on Park County's budget.
- 9) Route 89 through Paradise Valley is the historic gateway corridor to Yellowstone National Park. Yellowstone generates \$500 million of revenue to Park County businesses annually. Gravel pits and asphalt plants along the Yellowstone River threaten to harm our tourism industry.
- 10) This area has already been considered previously for this purpose, in 2022. The attempt was withdrawn due to both the negative public reaction and for the reasons listed above, and:
 - a. Park County has no need for a new gravel pit along the Yellowstone.
 - b. Park County – and all Montanans do have the need for publicly accessible hunting and recreation.
- 11) In the case that the reason this land is being leased in order to primarily provide financial benefit to the State, then we respectfully request to see the scope of those estimates, so that we can provide alternative solutions or relevant comparisons for what the State consider to be the public benefit of the lease.
- 12) In the case that you do still go forward with exploration of this project, we respectfully request that you hold multiple public meetings in Emigrant and throughout Park County and give sufficient (2+ weeks) public notice.
- 13) We believe that there are likely water rights considerations to be explored associated with the proposed gravel and asphalt mine. We are hopeful that this project does not rely on exempt well rights for water, and appreciate that the Montana Department of Environmental Quality may need to do a great deal of work to protect the integrity, safety and water quality of the Yellowstone River and the surrounding areas.

While the best interests of the citizens of Park County may not be your primary concern in this matter, they are our constituents and they are being asked to bear the many arduous burdens of this proposed gravel and asphalt mine. We “get it” - the mining company is beholden to its shareholders to maximize its profits, so they are doing what they do.

Here in Park County, we are no strangers to outside mining companies coming into Paradise Valley with the idea of making millions at the expense of the people, businesses, and lifestyles of the people of Park County. As the Representatives of the people of Park County and the surrounding area, we will not look the other way nor stand down.



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Finally, we would like to note that we have reached out to Riverside Contracting by phone and email, to see if they would discuss this project with us – and we have not heard back from them.

Thank you for your consideration of these points of note.

Thank you all for your public service.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Scott A. Rosenzweig".

Representative Scott Rosenzweig
House District 57
(406) 599-0719
Scott.Rosenzweig@legmt.gov

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie Isaly".

Representative Jamie Isaly
House District 58
(406) 209-2568
Jamie.Isaly@legmt.gov