

65

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Grohowski, Andrew
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:09 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: FW: Proposed Mine site beside our community LDCU2025 -29

From: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:04 PM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: FW: Proposed Mine site beside our community LDCU2025 -29

From: ksherwin <ksherwin@rogers.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 27, 2025 8:21 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: FW: Proposed Mine site beside our community LDCU2025 -29

You don't often get email from ksherwin@rogers.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Subject: Proposed Mine site beside our community

Dear Mr Grohowski:

I have grave concerns about the proposed sand mine bordering on our community off highway 60. I am a resident and owner in Saddlebag Lake Resort. We are a community of 700 plus homes. We have been surrounded by orange groves since the 1970's.

Many of the orchards around us have been removed and now the last orange groves that border our properties are being looked at for mining purposes.

Our concerns include noise, the existing water table and the impact on our aquaduct system, on the amount of sand and dust engulfing our community. The environmental impact ia also huge.

I have read the Polk County Development Review and am appalled that this proposal even be considered.

Hauling activity would be from 5am to 7 pm. Mining operation itself would be 24/7. The noise and blowing sand impact impact to neighboring homes cannot be denied or even make living there tolerable. There would be approximately 536 trucks per day 60 % going westbound and 40% going eastbound on a highway that has been continually riddled by accident after accident. The impact on highway 60 itself would be deadly.

Potable water to the site has not been established yet. We are already having huge water and sewer issues in our community. The implications of changing water tables, ground water run off and aquaduct systems we now have in place could be disastrous to our community.

The LDC defines compatibility as “A condition in which land uses or conditions can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion over time such that no use or condition is unduly negatively impacted directly or indirectly by another use or condition.

Environmentally , the land and lakes around us are abundant with wildlife. The impact of this proposal on our birds, fish and animals is disastrous. There is no compatibility between this proposal and the people or the wildlife.

We do not support this proposal and will do everything in our power to voice our opinions and to stop this proposal from going forward.

Kim Sherwin
2 Beaverkill
Saddlebag Lake Resort.

Sent from my Bell Samsung device over Canada's largest network.

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:09 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: URGENT ACTION REQUIRED - Sand Mine abutting 800 Residential Homes LDCU-2025-29

From: Greg Pratt <g.pratt.bnh@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 10:27 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>; thowell@lakewalesfl.gov <thowell@lakewalesfl.gov>; dwilliams@lakewalesfl.gov <dwilliams@lakewalesfl.gov>; dkrueger@lakewalesfl.gov <dkrueger@lakewalesfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: URGENT ACTION REQUIRED - Sand Mine abutting 800 Residential Homes LDCU-2025-29

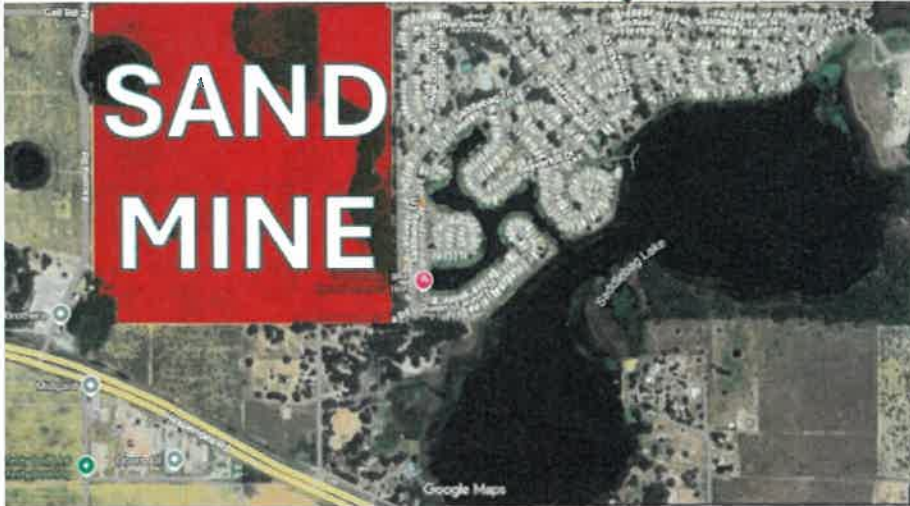
You don't often get email from g.pratt.bnh@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Polk County Planning Commission,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to LDCU-2025-29 Mammoth Grove Mine, which is slated for approval at a Public Hearing on DECEMBER 3.

I strongly oppose the Conditional Use approval of a sand mine on property which abuts our Residential community of nearly 800 residential homes (Saddlebag Lake Resort). The Polk County Development Review Committee claims that "the request is compatible with the surrounding area as the residential density in this area is very sparse". They have inaccurately assessed the surrounding area land use, as the county Zoning Maps incorrectly call out our community as "Leisure/Recreation". We are NOT Leisure/Recreation land use. We are Residential. We pay Residential Property Taxes on each and every one of our homes. **Sand mines are not compatible with Residential areas and we are requesting that the Conditional Use application be denied.**

OUR COMMUNITY



Sincerely

Greg Pratt
Saddlebag Lake Resort Owner and Resident
6 Saddlebag Trail South
Lake Wales, Florida

November 27, 2025

Land Development Division
Drawer GM03, P.O. Box 9005
Bartow, Florida

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Theresa Malburg, and I am a resident and homeowner in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community in Lake Wales. I'm writing to strongly oppose the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres immediately next to our neighborhood.

Saddlebag Lake Resort includes nearly 800 homes, and unlike many retirement communities, we each own the land our homes sit on. We are a peaceful, residential community built around a lake. This proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property value, and environment of our residents.

1. Major Error in the Application: Our Community Is Residential, NOT "Leisure Recreation"

One of the most serious problems with the applicant's submission is the incorrect description of our community's zoning. The Conditional Use application refers to Saddlebag Lake Resort as "Leisure Recreation." This is factually incorrect.

Our properties — including my own — are classified as Residential on our Polk County property tax records. Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a campground, a part-time leisure park, or a transient recreational area. It is a fully established, permanent residential neighborhood where seniors live year-round.

Mislabeling our community as “Leisure Recreation” minimizes the fact that the proposed mining operation would be placed directly beside hundreds of full-time residential homes, not a recreational park. This misclassification has a direct impact on land-use compatibility assessments and should be considered a serious flaw in the application.

We ask that the County recognize this mistake and evaluate the proposal using the correct and legally accurate zoning classification: Residential.

2. Air Quality and Health Concerns for Seniors

Many residents are older adults living with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other breathing issues. Dust and fine particulate matter from a borrow pit — even with controls — can drift directly into our community.

For seniors, this is not a small inconvenience; it is a serious health threat. Poor air quality can trigger respiratory distress, worsen chronic illnesses, and lead to emergency medical situations.

3. Our Lake and Outdoor Lifestyle Will Be Harmed

Our homes and social life revolve around Saddlebag Lake. Dust, noise, and vibration from mining will disrupt:

- Fishing and boating
- Water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitat
- Outdoor activities
- Peaceful enjoyment of our lakefront environment

We moved here for quiet, clean outdoor living — not industrial activity.

4. Noise, Vibration, and Industrial Disturbance

A major borrow pit would bring:

- Constant heavy machinery
- Backup alarms
- Engines and digging equipment
- Ground vibration
- Early morning and long-hour operations

This is completely incompatible with a senior retirement community.

5. Highway 60 Safety — 536 Trucks a Day Will Increase Accidents and Fatalities

Highway 60 just east of Lake Wales is already known by residents as a dangerous, high-accident stretch of road. Many of us have witnessed serious crashes, emergency responses, and multi-vehicle accidents along this corridor for years.

The proposed mining operation plans to add approximately 268 heavy trucks per day entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks will be pulling out onto a fast-moving highway where vehicles often travel over 60 mph.

Heavy trucks:

- Accelerate slowly
- Restrict visibility
- Create dangerous merging points
- Require long stopping distances

For a senior community where many drivers are cautious, slower, or have mobility or vision limitations, this presents an unacceptable risk. Adding hundreds of industrial trucks daily will almost certainly lead to more crashes — and potentially more fatalities.

Highway 60 is not designed for this level of industrial traffic near residential zones.

6. Serious Threats to Our Private Well-Water Supply

This issue is critical.

Saddlebag Lake Resort operates its own private well-water and sewer systems. We do not have access to city water. A borrow pit of this size adjacent to our homes risks:

- Lowering the water table, reducing or cutting off well-water availability
- Contaminating the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediment, or subsurface materials
- Altering underground water flow, pulling contaminants toward our community wells
- Permanent damage to our drinking-water supply

If our well water becomes unsafe or depleted, all 800 homes lose safe drinking water — with no alternative source. For seniors, this could quickly become a life-threatening crisis.

7. Loss of Property Value for Land-Ownning Seniors

Since we own our homes and the land beneath them, any decrease in property value directly harms us.

A borrow pit next door will significantly reduce home values. Many residents here live on fixed incomes and cannot afford to lose the equity they worked decades to build. If home values drop, many of us will be trapped financially, unable to relocate or recover.

8. Borrow Pit is Not Compatible With Our Area

Even considering the mix of Agricultural/Residential Rural and Industrial zoning surrounding us, approving this Conditional Use directly beside a large, permanent 55+ residential neighborhood is simply not appropriate.

No set of conditions can make a massive industrial mining operation compatible with a senior lakeside community.

What We Are Asking

We respectfully request that the County:

1. Deny the Conditional Use request
 2. Recognize the application's zoning misclassification
 3. Protect the health and safety of elderly residents
 4. Safeguard our well-water supply and lake environment
 5. Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60
 6. Protect the property values and financial stability of our community
 7. Ensure Saddlebag residents have opportunity for input at public hearings
-

In Closing

Saddlebag Lake Resort is our home. We worked our whole lives to retire in a safe, peaceful place. A borrow pit of this size, in this location, poses serious risks to our health, safety, water supply, property values, and way of life.

We respectfully ask that you protect our community by denying this Conditional Use request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Theresa Malburg

Resident, Saddlebag Lake Resort

15 Grey Fox Lane

Lake Wales, Florida

**Suzanne Speidel
21 Royal Coachman Street
Saddlebag Lake Resort
Lake Wales, Florida 33898**

Polk County Office of Planning and Development

Drawer GM03, P.O. Box 9005

Bartow, Florida

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission

Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Regarding: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Suzanne Speidel. I am a full-time resident and land and home owner in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community in Lake Wales. I also am writing to oppose the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate {Borrow Pit} operation scheduled for possible approval on December 3, 2025, at a Public Hearing in Bartow. As many others of my community members have stated in writing to you, we do not feel that this project should be considered any further. If so, I am prepared to have my voice along with others reach out to ALL levels of state government as well as the Media. Clearly you have been misled by those who desire to utilize this land to their own benefit, not caring about what this can do to us residents nearby, of which there are about 800 homes. To allow this to happen would present a disaster to our residents along with our beautiful, protected environment and wildlife,

I am also extremely upset about the way in which this was presented. Although this apparently has been planned and reached the third and final level of approval, we here at Saddlebag knew nothing of this until some residents within 500 feet of the potential mining local received a letter indicating the proposed project. If it was communicated in any way prior to this, we were not made aware, as we would have made our feelings and rational known back then. You can see how this looks to us? Something is awry!

On a more personal level I am very concerned about what this potential environment will do to me. I am a two-time cancer survivor and have 3 autoimmune diseases. I can only imagine what the ramifications of this project, if allowed to go forward, could do to me. Saddlebag is my home, and I live here year-round and cannot afford to move. I can only imagine how the ramifications of this project could affect me.

I am literally begging for my life here, so please do not let this go forward.

Thank You, Suzanne Speidel

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Grohowski, Andrew
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:09 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: LDCU-2025-29

From: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:06 PM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: LDCU-2025-29

From: Chris Dunkel <cdunkel2015@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 27, 2025 10:03 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>; news@lakewalesnews.net <news@lakewalesnews.net>; Chris Dunkel <cdunkel2015@gmail.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from cdunkel2015@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

November 27, 2025

Land Development Division
 Drawer GM03, P.O. Box 9005
 Bartow, Florida

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
 Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

Our names are Christine and Jeffrey Dunkel, and we are resident and homeowner in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community in Lake Wales. I'm writing to strongly oppose the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres immediately next to our neighborhood.

Saddlebag Lake Resort includes nearly 800 homes, and unlike many retirement communities, we each own the land our homes sit on. We are a peaceful, residential community built around a lake. This proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property value, and environment of our residents.

1. Major Error in the Application: Our Community Is Residential, NOT "Leisure Recreation"

One of the most serious problems with the applicant's submission is the incorrect description of our community's zoning. The Conditional Use application refers to Saddlebag Lake Resort as "Leisure Recreation." This is factually incorrect.

Our properties — including my own — are classified as Residential on our Polk County property tax records. Saddlebag Lake Resort

is not a campground, a part-time leisure park, or a transient recreational area. It is a fully established, permanent residential neighborhood where seniors live year-round.

Mislabeling our community as “Leisure Recreation” minimizes the fact that the proposed mining operation would be placed directly beside hundreds of full-time residential homes, not a recreational park. This misclassification has a direct impact on land-use compatibility assessments and should be considered a serious flaw in the application.

We ask that the County recognize this mistake and evaluate the proposal using the correct and legally accurate zoning classification: Residential.

2. Air Quality and Health Concerns for Seniors

Many residents are older adults living with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other breathing issues. Dust and fine particulate matter from a borrow pit — even with controls — can drift directly into our community.

For seniors, this is not a small inconvenience; it is a serious health threat. Poor air quality can trigger respiratory distress, worsen chronic illnesses, and lead to emergency medical situations.

3. Our Lake and Outdoor Lifestyle Will Be Harmed

Our homes and social life revolve around Saddlebag Lake. Dust, noise, and vibration from mining will disrupt:

- Fishing and boating
- Water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitat
- Outdoor activities
- Peaceful enjoyment of our lakefront environment

We moved here for quiet, clean outdoor living — not industrial activity.

4. Noise, Vibration, and Industrial Disturbance

A major borrow pit would bring:

- Constant heavy machinery
- Backup alarms
- Engines and digging equipment
- Ground vibration
- Early morning and long-hour operations

This is completely incompatible with a senior retirement community.

5. Highway 60 Safety — 536 Trucks a Day Will Increase Accidents and Fatalities

Highway 60 just east of Lake Wales is already known by residents as a dangerous, high-accident stretch of road. Many of us have witnessed serious crashes, emergency responses, and multi-vehicle accidents along this corridor for years.

The proposed mining operation plans to add approximately 268 heavy trucks per day entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks will be pulling out onto a fast-moving highway where vehicles often travel over 60 mph.

Heavy trucks:

- Accelerate slowly
- Restrict visibility
- Create dangerous merging points
- Require long stopping distances

For a senior community where many drivers are cautious, slower, or have mobility or vision limitations, this presents an unacceptable risk. Adding hundreds of industrial trucks daily will almost certainly lead to more crashes — and potentially more fatalities.

Highway 60 is not designed for this level of industrial traffic near residential zones.

6. Serious Threats to Our Private Well-Water Supply

This issue is critical.

Saddlebag Lake Resort operates its own private well-water and sewer systems. We do not have access to city water. A borrow pit of this size adjacent to our homes risks:

- Lowering the water table, reducing or cutting off well-water availability
- Contaminating the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediment, or subsurface materials
- Altering underground water flow, pulling contaminants toward our community wells
- Permanent damage to our drinking-water supply

If our well water becomes unsafe or depleted, all 800 homes lose safe drinking water — with no alternative source. For seniors, this could quickly become a life-threatening crisis.

7. Loss of Property Value for Land-Ownning Seniors

Since we own our homes and the land beneath them, any decrease in property value directly harms us.

A borrow pit next door will significantly reduce home values. Many residents here live on fixed incomes and cannot afford to lose the equity they worked decades to build. If home values drop, many of us will be trapped financially, unable to relocate or recover.

8. Borrow Pit is Not Compatible With Our Area

Even considering the mix of Agricultural/Residential Rural and Industrial zoning surrounding us, approving this Conditional Use directly beside a large, permanent 55+ residential neighborhood is simply not appropriate.

No set of conditions can make a massive industrial mining operation compatible with a senior lakeside community.

What We Are Asking

We respectfully request that the County:

1. Deny the Conditional Use request
2. Recognize the application's zoning misclassification
3. Protect the health and safety of elderly residents
4. Safeguard our well-water supply and lake environment
5. Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60
6. Protect the property values and financial stability of our community
7. Ensure Saddlebag residents have opportunity for input at public hearings

In Closing

Saddlebag Lake Resort is our home. We worked our whole lives to retire in a safe, peaceful place. A borrow pit of this size, in this location, poses serious risks to our health, safety, water supply, property values, and way of life.

We respectfully ask that you protect our community by denying this Conditional Use request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Christine and Jeffrey Dunkel
Resident, Saddlebag Lake Resort
73 Saddlebag Trail
Lake Wales, Florida 33898

To Planner on call at Polk County
Case # LDUC-2025-29

My name is Michael Hodge and my wife Valerie and I reside at Saddlebag lake Resort in Lake Wales Florida. We live at 13 Silver Doctor lane and also own two other properties within the park, both located at 17 and 28 Silver Doctor lane. We have concerns about the possible mining off of Mammoth Grove Rd close to our community.

We are deeply concerned about possible runoff into our lake, which is one of the healthiest in Polk County. Our Environmental Committee participates in the University of Florida's Lake Watch Program. I take samples of the lake water each month that are tested by the University's program. Residents of Saddlebag Lake Resort are very proud of the effort our community takes to ensure our lake water continues to be healthy and our wildlife thrives. Also this is a wet mine which will use MILLIONS of gallons of water.

The wet mine requires a slurry technique that will create enormous amounts of waste for many many years into the future.

The increase of noise the mining will produce is also of great concern. Who would want to live around that kind of noise? Will the noise be at dangerous unhealthy levels? We want quiet, peaceful living

The Lake Wales area already experiences an abundance of truck traffic on a daily basis. To add an additional 500 or so trucks per day, 6 days a week will impact the every day life of all citizens of our town. The increase of traffic in our area will have a huge impact on our roads, driving time, safety with little possibility of expanding lanes and funding for road repair.

As residents who will be greatly negatively impacted by this borrow pit mining operation, we are not at all in agreement..

We write in hopes that this is not what is in our future. Thank you for taking serious consideration on this issue.

Michael and Valerie Hodge
5390 Saddlebag Lake Rd.
Lake Wales, Fl. 33898
Ph: 301-748-8961
mchodge1201@gmail.com

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Grohowski, Andrew
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:10 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: case #LDCU-2025-2029

From: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:06 PM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: case #LDCU-2025-2029

From: JANET BUXTON <gnjbuxton@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 9:56 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: case #LDCU-2025-2029

You don't often get email from gnjbuxton@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please reconsider your plan for Borrow Pit next to Saddlebag Lake Resort! We purchased this property 34 years ago because it was nestled in a lovely orange grove! That, unfortunately is no longer but to have it replaced by a Borrow Pit is truly heartbreaking!

We have roughly 1600 people in our resort, many full time residents! These are the same people who shop and pay taxes in Polk County without overloading the school system.

I will not be at Saddlebags much longer but leaving to my three sons to love and enjoy! Please do not take the joy of leaving this to them from me.

Yours truly,

Janet Buxton
31 Silversides
Lake Wales, FL

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Grohowski, Andrew
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:10 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Borrow Pit Case #LDCU-2025-29

From: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:07 PM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Borrow Pit Case #LDCU-2025-29

From: Randy Boileau <randy.boileau@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 9:56 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>; Geri Boileau <geri.boileau@gmail.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Borrow Pit Case #LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from randy.boileau@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

November 28, 2025

Land Development Division
 Drawer GM03, P.O. Box 9005
 Bartow, Florida

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
 Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

Our names are Randolph and Geraldine Boileau, and we are residents and homeowners in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community in Lake Wales. We are writing to object, in the most strenuous possible terms, the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres immediately adjacent to our neighborhood.

Saddlebag Lake Resort includes nearly 800 homes, and unlike many retirement communities, we each own the land our homes sit on. We are a peaceful, residential community built around a lake. This proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property value, and environment of our residents.

1. Major Error in the Application: Our Community Is Residential, NOT "Leisure Recreation". A 10-minute tour through our community will validate this fact.

One of the most serious problems with the applicant's submission is the incorrect description of our

community's zoning. The Conditional Use application refers to Saddlebag Lake Resort as "Leisure Recreation." This is factually incorrect.

Our properties — including ours — are classified as Residential on our Polk County property tax records. Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a campground, a part-time leisure park, or a transient recreational area. It is a fully established, permanent residential neighborhood where seniors live year-round. Mislabeling our community as "Leisure Recreation" minimizes the fact that the proposed mining operation would be placed directly beside hundreds of full-time residential homes, not a recreational park. This misclassification has a direct impact on land-use compatibility assessments and should be considered a serious flaw in the application.

We ask that the County recognize this mistake and evaluate the proposal using the correct and legally accurate zoning classification: Residential.

2. Air Quality and Health Concerns for Seniors

Many residents are elderly people living with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other breathing issues. Dust and fine particulate matter from a borrow pit — even with controls — can drift directly into our community. For seniors, this is not a small inconvenience; it is a serious health threat. Poor air quality can trigger respiratory distress, worsen chronic illnesses, and lead to emergency medical situations.

3. Our Lake and Outdoor Lifestyle Will Be Harmed

Our homes and social life revolve around Saddlebag Lake. Dust, noise, and vibration from mining will disrupt:

- Fishing and boating
- Water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitat
- Outdoor activities
- Peaceful enjoyment of our lakefront environment

We moved here for quiet, clean outdoor living — not industrial activity.

4. Noise, Vibration, and Industrial Disturbance

A major borrow pit would bring:

- Constant heavy machinery
- Backup alarms
- Engines and digging equipment
- Ground vibration
- Early morning and long-hour operations

This is completely incompatible with a senior retirement community.

5. Highway 60 Safety — 536 Trucks a Day Will Increase Accidents and Fatalities

Highway 60 just east of Lake Wales is already known by residents as a dangerous, high-accident stretch of road. Many of us have witnessed serious crashes, emergency responses, and multi-vehicle accidents along this corridor for years. The proposed mining operation plans to add approximately 268 heavy trucks per day entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks will be pulling out onto a fast-moving highway where vehicles often travel over 60 mph.

Heavy trucks:

- Accelerate slowly
- Restrict visibility

- Create dangerous merging points
- Require long stopping distances

For a senior community where many drivers are cautious, slower, or have mobility or vision limitations, this presents an unacceptable risk. Adding hundreds of industrial trucks daily will almost certainly lead to more crashes — and potentially more fatalities.

Highway 60 is not designed for this level of industrial traffic near residential zones.

6. Serious Threats to the health of our water supply.

This issue is critical. Saddlebag Lake Resort operates its own private well-water and sewer systems. We do not have access to city water. A borrow pit of this size adjacent to our homes risks:

- Lowering the water table, reducing or cutting off well-water availability
- Contaminating the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediment, or subsurface materials
- Altering underground water flow, pulling contaminants toward our community wells
- Permanent damage to our drinking-water supply

If our well water becomes unsafe or depleted, all 800 homes lose safe drinking water — with no alternative source. For seniors, this could quickly become a life-threatening crisis for which Polk County MUST bear the cost of remediation.

7. Loss of Property Value for Land-Ownning Seniors

Since we own our homes and the land beneath them, any decrease in property value directly harms us. A borrow pit next door will significantly reduce home values. Many residents here live on fixed incomes and cannot afford to lose the equity they worked decades to build. If home values drop, many of us will be trapped financially, unable to relocate or recover. The lost tax revenues to the county from this dynamic will be irrevocable.

8. Industrial Mining is Not Compatible With Our Area

Even considering the mix of Agricultural/Residential Rural and Industrial zoning surrounding us, approving this Conditional Use directly beside a large, permanent 55+ residential neighborhood is simply not appropriate. No set of conditions can make a massive industrial mining operation compatible with a senior lakeside community.

What We Are Asking

We respectfully request that the County:

1. Deny the Conditional Use request
2. Recognize the application's zoning misclassification
3. Protect the health and safety of elderly residents
4. Safeguard our well-water supply and lake environment
5. Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60
6. Protect the property values and financial stability of our community
7. Ensure Saddlebag residents have opportunity for input at public hearings

Saddlebag Lake Resort is our home. We worked our whole lives to retire in a safe, peaceful place. A borrow pit of this size, in this location, poses serious risks to our health, safety, water supply, property values, and way of life. We respectfully ask that you protect our community by denying this Conditional Use request. **Also, please ensure this emailed letter is included in the public record regarding discussion of this topic.**

Sincerely,

Randolph & Geraldine Boileau

One Saddlebag Trail
Lake Wales, FL 33898

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Grohowski, Andrew
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:10 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: LDCU-2025-29 Formal Opposition to Proposed Wet-Mining Borrow Pit Along SR 60 Adjacent to Saddlebag Lake Resort.

From: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:07 PM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: LDCU-2025-29 Formal Opposition to Proposed Wet-Mining Borrow Pit Along SR 60 Adjacent to Saddlebag Lake Resort.

From: Mike Syrett <mdsyrett@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 10:09 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: LDCU-2025-29 Formal Opposition to Proposed Wet-Mining Borrow Pit Along SR 60 Adjacent to Saddlebag Lake Resort.

You don't often get email from mdsyrett@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Subject: Formal Opposition to Proposed Wet-Mining Borrow Pit Along SR 60 Adjacent to Saddlebag Lake Resort.
Email transmission dated November 27, 2025

Dear Mr. Grohowski, andrewgrohowski@polk-county.gov

I am submitting this letter to formally express my **strong opposition** to the proposed **wet-mining borrow pit** identified as **LDCU-2025-29**, located approximately **500 meters from Saddlebag Lake Resort** along **State Road 60** in unincorporated Polk County. As a resident and stakeholder, I am deeply concerned about the serious and long-term hazards this project poses to public safety, environmental integrity, and the quality of life for my family, neighbours and hundreds of residents in the surrounding area.

1. Traffic Safety Hazards on SR 60

State Road 60 is a high-speed, high-volume freight corridor with a long history of major accidents. Introducing constant heavy-truck ingress and egress from a borrow pit will:

- Increase the likelihood of severe rear-end and side-impact crashes
- Create dangerous slow-downs on a 60+ mph highway
- Add road slickness from mud, sand, and wet clay tracked onto SR 60
- Reduce visibility due to dust and water spray from mining operations

These hazards directly threaten not only local residents but all motorists traveling the corridor.

2. Groundwater and Lake Impacts

A wet-mining pit excavates below the water table, allowing groundwater to flow freely into the excavation. This threatens the hydrology of nearby lakes, including Saddlebag Lake, by:

- Altering water levels
- Changing water chemistry and clarity
- Increasing the potential for contamination from fuel, hydraulic fluids, and sediment
- Creating new pathways for pollutants into the aquifer system

The proximity of the proposed pit to residential lakes makes these risks especially concerning.

3. Air Quality, Noise, and Public-Health Concerns

Residents within Saddlebag Lake Resort and surrounding neighbourhoods will be exposed to:

- **Silica dust** and fine particulates from excavation operations
- **Diesel exhaust** from heavy trucks and equipment
- **Chronic noise** from pumps, draglines, loaders, and trucks

These impacts are incompatible with nearby residential living—especially in a community with many retirees and individuals with respiratory conditions.

4. Wildlife and Environmental Disruption

The SR 60 corridor functions as a wildlife movement route. Wet mining creates:

- Habitat loss and fragmentation
- Increased animal-vehicle collisions
- Attraction of nuisance wildlife to newly formed, deep open-water pits
- Long-term ecological degradation that cannot be fully mitigated

This location is ecologically sensitive and unsuited to mining operations.

5. Permanent Land-Use Conflicts

Wet pits create long-term problems, including:

- Deep, unfenced water bodies that pose safety hazards
- Reduced property values for nearby homeowners
- Unknown long-term water-quality consequences
- Reclamation challenges that often leave land unusable or unsafe

The lasting footprint of a wet borrow pit is incompatible with nearby residential and recreational land uses.

6. Conclusion and Request

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Polk County Planning Commission to **deny the Conditional Use Application LDCU-2025-29**. At minimum, I request that the County require:

- A full Environmental Impact Assessment

- A comprehensive traffic study specific to SR 60 truck ingress/egress
- A groundwater connectivity analysis
- Extended buffers of at least 1,500 meters from all residences
- A detailed reclamation plan with bonding

The risks to public safety, the environment, and the local community are significant, foreseeable, and avoidable. This site is **not appropriate** for wet-mining operations.

Thank you for your attention and for considering the serious concerns of the residents who will be directly affected by this proposal. I respectfully request that this letter be entered into the public record for the December 3, 2025 hearing.

Sincerely,

Michael D Syrett
96 Silversides Street

Lake Wales FL 33898

Saddlebag Resort - A 55+ Community

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:17 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Case#LDCU-2025-29

From: Brent Buxton <brentbuxton1961@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 1:24 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Case#LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from brentbuxton1961@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

I vote NO on the Borrow Pit proposal that is planned near Saddlebag Lake Resort.

Thank you,

Saddlebags Lake Resort Homeowner
31 Silversides Lake Wales FL 33898

November 28, 2025

Land Development Division
Drawer GM03, P.O. Box 9005
Bartow, Florida

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Betty Malburg, and I am a resident and homeowner in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community in Lake Wales. I'm writing to strongly oppose the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres immediately next to our neighborhood.

Saddlebag Lake Resort includes nearly 800 homes, and unlike many retirement communities, we each own the land our homes sit on. We are a peaceful, residential community built around a lake. This proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property value, and environment of our residents.

1. Major Error in the Application: Our Community Is Residential, NOT "Leisure Recreation"

One of the most serious problems with the applicant's submission is the incorrect description of our community's zoning. The Conditional Use application refers to Saddlebag Lake Resort as "Leisure Recreation." This is factually incorrect.

Our properties — including my own — are classified as Residential on our Polk County property tax records. Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a campground, a part-time leisure park, or a transient recreational area. It is a fully established, permanent residential neighborhood where seniors live year-round.

Mislabeling our community as “Leisure Recreation” minimizes the fact that the proposed mining operation would be placed directly beside hundreds of full-time residential homes, not a recreational park. This misclassification has a direct impact on land-use compatibility assessments and should be considered a serious flaw in the application.

We ask that the County recognize this mistake and evaluate the proposal using the correct and legally accurate zoning classification: Residential.

2. Air Quality and Health Concerns for Seniors

Many residents are older adults living with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other breathing issues. Dust and fine particulate matter from a borrow pit — even with controls — can drift directly into our community.

For seniors, this is not a small inconvenience; it is a serious health threat. Poor air quality can trigger respiratory distress, worsen chronic illnesses, and lead to emergency medical situations.

3. Our Lake and Outdoor Lifestyle Will Be Harmed

Our homes and social life revolve around Saddlebag Lake. Dust, noise, and vibration from mining will disrupt:

- Fishing and boating
- Water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitat
- Outdoor activities
- Peaceful enjoyment of our lakefront environment

We moved here for quiet, clean outdoor living — not industrial activity.

4. Noise, Vibration, and Industrial Disturbance

A major borrow pit would bring:

2

- Constant heavy machinery
- Backup alarms
- Engines and digging equipment
- Ground vibration
- Early morning and long-hour operations

This is completely incompatible with a senior retirement community.

5. Highway 60 Safety — 536 Trucks a Day Will Increase Accidents and Fatalities

Highway 60 just east of Lake Wales is already known by residents as a dangerous, high-accident stretch of road. Many of us have witnessed serious crashes, emergency responses, and multi vehicle accidents along this corridor for years.

The proposed mining operation plans to add approximately 268 heavy trucks per day entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks will be pulling out onto a fast-moving highway where vehicles often travel over 60 mph.

Heavy trucks:

- Accelerate slowly
- Restrict visibility
- Create dangerous merging points
- Require long stopping distances

For a senior community where many drivers are cautious, slower, or have mobility or vision limitations, this presents an unacceptable risk. Adding hundreds of industrial trucks

daily will almost certainly lead to more crashes — and potentially more fatalities.

Highway 60 is not designed for this level of industrial traffic near residential zones.

3

6. Serious Threats to Our Private Well-Water Supply

This issue is critical.

Saddlebag Lake Resort operates its own private well-water and sewer systems. We do not have access to city water. A borrow pit of this size adjacent to our homes risks:

- Lowering the water table, reducing or cutting off well-water availability
- Contaminating the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediment, or subsurface materials •
- Altering underground water flow, pulling contaminants toward our community wells •
- Permanent damage to our drinking-water supply

If our well water becomes unsafe or depleted, all 800 homes lose safe drinking water — with no alternative source. For seniors, this could quickly become a life-threatening crisis.

7. Loss of Property Value for Land-Owning Seniors

Since we own our homes and the land beneath them, any decrease in property value directly harms us.

A borrow pit next door will significantly reduce home values. Many residents here live on fixed incomes and cannot afford to lose the equity they worked decades to build. If home values drop, many of us will be trapped financially, unable to relocate or recover.

8. Borrow Pit is Not Compatible With Our Area

Even considering the mix of Agricultural/Residential Rural and Industrial zoning surrounding us, approving this Conditional Use directly beside a large, permanent 55+ residential neighborhood is simply not appropriate.

No set of conditions can make a massive industrial mining operation compatible with a senior lakeside community.

4

What We Are Asking

We respectfully request that the County:

1. Deny the Conditional Use request
2. Recognize the application's zoning misclassification
3. Protect the health and safety of elderly residents
4. Safeguard our well-water supply and lake environment
5. Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60
6. Protect the property values and financial stability of our community
7. Ensure Saddlebag residents have opportunity for input at public

hearings In Closing

Saddlebag Lake Resort is our home. We worked our whole lives to retire in a safe, peaceful place. A borrow pit of this size, in this location, poses serious risks to our health, safety, water supply, property values, and way of life.

We respectfully ask that you protect our community by denying this Conditional Use

request. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Daniel and Adela Casey

Resident, Saddlebag Lake Resort

13 Pink Lady Lane (physical address)

5303 Saddlebag Lake Road (mailing address)

Lake Wales, Florida 33898

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:18 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]:

From: Chris Dunkel <cdunkel2015@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 9:11 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]:

November 27, 2025

Land Development Division
 Drawer GM03, P.O. Box 9005
 Bartow, Florida

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
 Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

My name is June Ringle, and we are resident and homeowner in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community in Lake Wales. I'm writing to strongly oppose the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres immediately next to our neighborhood.

Saddlebag Lake Resort includes nearly 800 homes, and unlike many retirement communities, we each own the land our homes sit on. We are a peaceful, residential community built around a lake. This proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property value, and environment of our residents.

1. Major Error in the Application: Our Community Is Residential, NOT "Leisure Recreation"

One of the most serious problems with the applicant's submission is the incorrect description of our community's zoning. The Conditional Use application refers to Saddlebag Lake Resort as "Leisure Recreation." This is factually incorrect.

Our properties — including my own — are classified as Residential on our Polk County property tax records. Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a campground, a part-time leisure park, or a transient recreational area. It is a fully established, permanent residential neighborhood where seniors live year-round.

Mislabeling our community as "Leisure Recreation" minimizes the fact that the proposed mining operation would be placed directly beside hundreds of full-time residential homes, not a recreational park. This misclassification has a direct impact on land-use compatibility assessments and should be considered a serious flaw in the application.

We ask that the County recognize this mistake and evaluate the proposal using the correct and legally accurate zoning classification: Residential.

2. Air Quality and Health Concerns for Seniors

Many residents are older adults living with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other breathing issues. Dust and fine particulate matter

from a borrow pit — even with controls — can drift directly into our community.

For seniors, this is not a small inconvenience; it is a serious health threat. Poor air quality can trigger respiratory distress, worsen chronic illnesses, and lead to emergency medical situations.

3. Our Lake and Outdoor Lifestyle Will Be Harmed

Our homes and social life revolve around Saddlebag Lake. Dust, noise, and vibration from mining will disrupt:

- Fishing and boating
- Water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitat
- Outdoor activities
- Peaceful enjoyment of our lakefront environment

We moved here for quiet, clean outdoor living — not industrial activity.

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A major borrow pit would bring:

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- Backup alarms
- Engines and digging equipment
- Ground vibration
- Early morning and long-hour operations

This is completely incompatible with a senior retirement community.

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Highway 60 just east of Lake Wales is already known by residents as a dangerous, high-accident stretch of road. Many of us have witnessed serious crashes, emergency responses, and multi-vehicle accidents along this corridor for years.

The proposed mining operation plans to add approximately 268 heavy trucks per day entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks will be pulling out onto a fast-moving highway where vehicles often travel over 60 mph.

Heavy trucks:

- Accelerate slowly
- Restrict visibility
- Create dangerous merging points
- Require long stopping distances

For a senior community where many drivers are cautious, slower, or have mobility or vision limitations, this presents an unacceptable risk. Adding hundreds of industrial trucks daily will almost certainly lead to more crashes — and potentially more fatalities.

Highway 60 is not designed for this level of industrial traffic near residential zones.

6. Serious Threats to Our Private Well-Water Supply

This issue is critical.

Saddlebag Lake Resort operates its own private well-water and sewer systems. We do not have access to city water. A borrow pit of this size adjacent to our homes risks:

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- Contaminating the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediment, or subsurface materials
- Altering underground water flow, pulling contaminants toward our community wells
- Permanent damage to our drinking-water supply

If our well water becomes unsafe or depleted, all 800 homes lose safe drinking water — with no alternative source. For seniors, this could quickly become a life-threatening crisis.

7. Loss of Property Value for Land-Ownning Seniors

Since we own our homes and the land beneath them, any decrease in property value directly harms us.

A borrow pit next door will significantly reduce home values. Many residents here live on fixed incomes and cannot afford to lose the equity they worked decades to build. If home values drop, many of us will be trapped financially, unable to relocate or recover.

8. Borrow Pit is Not Compatible With Our Area

Even considering the mix of Agricultural/Residential Rural and Industrial zoning surrounding us, approving this Conditional Use directly beside a large, permanent 55+ residential neighborhood is simply not appropriate.

No set of conditions can make a massive industrial mining operation compatible with a senior lakeside community.

What We Are Asking

We respectfully request that the County:

1. Deny the Conditional Use request
2. Recognize the application's zoning misclassification
3. Protect the health and safety of elderly residents
4. Safeguard our well-water supply and lake environment
5. Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60
6. Protect the property values and financial stability of our community
7. Ensure Saddlebag residents have opportunity for input at public hearings

In Closing

Saddlebag Lake Resort is our home. We worked our whole lives to retire in a safe, peaceful place. A borrow pit of this size, in this location, poses serious risks to our health, safety, water supply, property values, and way of life.

We respectfully ask that you protect our community by denying this Conditional Use request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
June Ringle
Resident, Saddlebag Lake Resort
69 Saddlebag Trail
Lake Wales, Florida 33898

You need to send this email ASAP. Unless you are thinking about selling them you should do that ASAP because if this is approved you will lose \$\$\$.

[Show quoted text](#)

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:18 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Case Number LDCU-2025-29

From: Owen Decker <oddtaz@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 10:21 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Case Number LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from oddtaz@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,
I/We, the undersigned resident(s) of Saddlebag Lake Resort, are writing to express my/our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

Thanks
Owen & Jackie Decker
5646 Saddlebag Lake Rd
10 Grayhackle
Lake Wales Fl 33898
606-922-6520

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:19 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to the Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

From: Bob Dubay <bobdubay3@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 11:52 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to the Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

[You don't often get email from bobdubay3@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioner,

I, the undersigned resident of Saddlebag Lake Resort, am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

Robert Dubay
1 Saddlebag Trail South
248-860-4871

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:20 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: Case Nur LDCU-2025-29

From: brandie pendleton <brandieyafg68@outlook.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 12:10 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Case Nur LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from brandieyafg68@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Nur LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

I/We, the undersigned resident(s) of Saddlebag Lake Resort, are writing to express my/our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

Thank you
Brandie Pendleton
Shannon Carroll
31 Blue Quill Circle
Lake Wales Florida
Saddlebag Lake Resort

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Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:20 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine

From: Laurie Jacobs <ljacobs.medishield@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 12:29 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine

You don't often get email from ljacobs.medishield@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II
Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

We, the undersigned residents of Saddlebag Lake Resort are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

Laurie and David Jacobs
33 Blue Quill Circle
Saddlebag Lake Resort
Lake Wales, FL

www.medishieldinc.com

Laurie Jacobs, President
Medishield, Inc.
1598 Rector Lane
New Albany, IN 47150
502-939-9903

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:20 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Mammoth Grove Mine case number LDCU-2025-29

From: Bill Moss <bmossbill2@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 12:02 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Mammoth Grove Mine case number LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from bmossbill2@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,
I/We, the undersigned resident(s) of Saddlebag Lake Resort, are writing to express my/our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

William and Angela Moss
Owners @ 11 Parson Tom Circle
Saddlebag Lake

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:22 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

From: Sue Teague <movinsue@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 10:10 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

I/We, the undersigned resident(s) of Saddlebag Lake Resort, are writing to express my/our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

Susan Teague 4 Stonefly Circle, Lake Wales, FL

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:22 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]:

From: B H Booth <bhbooth46@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 10:13 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]:

You don't often get email from bhbooth46@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

I/We, the undersigned resident(s) of Saddlebag Lake Resort, are writing to express my/our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

Belinda Harrison Booth
5026 Saddlebag Lake Rd
1 Grayhackle
Lake Wales, Florida 33896

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:22 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Proposal LCDU-2025-29

From: Kathy ODom <kjngo2004@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 10:32 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Proposal LCDU-2025-29

You don't often get email from kjngo2004@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello, we are opposed LCDU-2025-29. We have just purchased our home here in "Saddlebag lake Resort". We have been visiting many friends here for the last several years. This is a community of 55 and over residents. Our community contributes almost \$800,000 to the Polk County tax base. Our voices should be considered as much as any other resident of Polk county. If this proposal is passed, our beautiful community will be put in jeopardy. Our own sustainable sewer system, water supply and lake will be affected by this. Not to mention our property values! We ask that you visit our community to see what would be destroyed if this proposal is passed. We have all worked very hard to make SLR a beautiful contributing area of Lake Wales. A place that the County can be proud of. Do Not Pass Proposal #LDCU-2025-29

Sincerely, Jack & Kathy O'Dom

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

46

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:27 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Attention: Polk County Planning Commission

From: Charlotte <charlottesweb27@aol.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 11:24 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Attention: Polk County Planning Commission

You don't often get email from charlottesweb27@aol.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

I/We, the undersigned resident(s) of Saddlebag Lake Resort, are writing to express my/our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

[Sent from AOL on Android](#)

Thank you,

Charlotte Blazer
32 Saddlebag Trl.
Lake Wales, FL.

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:27 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]:

From: lewis5004 <lewis5004@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 1:29 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]:

You don't often get email from lewis5004@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Sent from my T-Mobile 5G Device

PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,
I/We, the undersigned resident(s) of Saddlebag Lake Resort, are writing to express my/our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

Wallace Lewis
#3 Stonefly Circle
Lake Wales FL

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:28 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: Case # LDCU-2025-29

From: steve bruner <brundog2020@hotmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 5:07 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Case # LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from brundog2020@hotmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

ATTN: Polk County Planning Commission Andrew Grohowski, planner 2 ,I'm writing in opposition to the Mammoth grove mine case # LDCU-2025-29. I live at 15 Silver Dr ln in Saddlebag Lake Resort lake Wales 33898. This proposed site will cause irreparable harm to the area if allowed. Steve and Reva Bruner
Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:28 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

From: niteshift1@comcast.net <niteshift1@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 11:39 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from niteshift1@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
 Andrew Grohowski, Planner II
 Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,
 We are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed Conditional Use request - Sand Mine/Borrow Pit, Case # LDCU-2025-29.

Saddlebag Lake Resort is a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road adjacent to the proposed Sand Mine Pit. We feel that the proposed mine pit could have a significant negative impact on our water supply and air quality, in addition to the traffic concerns brought on by this proposal.

Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a part-time leisure campground. It is a neighborhood where residents own their homes and live here full-time. This proposal will negatively impact the value of our homes.

The proposed Sand Mine / Borow Pit would not only impact our water supply and foul our air, the long hours of daily pit mining operation along with hundreds of heavy trucks entering and exiting along Rt 60 would potentially cause serious traffic issues on a road that is already too dangerous.

Saddlebag Lake Resort runs a private well-water and private sewer system that already has challenges. The Mine/Borrow pit proposal running right beside our homes could cause the contamination of our water supply and the lowering of the water table adding to those challenges.

Finally, the speed at which this proposal was sent to the residents of the Saddlebag Lake Resort has resulted in very little time to consider and formulate an appropriate response. We have had a very limited timeframe to meet, consider, discuss the impacts, and coordinate a community response. Considering that our community has 800 homes, and that the notification/proposal was sent to merely a fraction of our residents, most residents are learning about this notification through word of mouth and on Facebook. We find ourselves panicking just to get our voices heard.

We urge you to deny this proposal.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

William & Karen Morrison

47 Saddlebag Trail

Saddlebag Lake Resort

Lake Wales, FL 33898

(603)680-0551

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:29 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

From: Debra Isenhower <disenhower2458@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 3:19 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from disenhower2458@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)
Attention: Polk County Planning Commission

Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Dear Commissioners,

We, the undersigned residents of Saddlebag Lake Resort, are writing to express our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We have several family members and friends who live here and am concerned about health issues that can arise from something like this.

We are a 55+ community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road, Lake Wales, Florida. We ask you this, would you want something like this in your back yard?

Sincerely,

Bruce & Deb Isenhower
5700 Saddlebag Lake Road
Lake Wales, FL 33898

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:30 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case # LDCU-2025-29

From: Kris Bender <Kris@benderrealtyllc.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 5:07 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case # LDCU-2025-29

Dear Planner On Call:

I am a licensed real estate broker whose office is in Lake Wales. The majority of my sales come from the community of Saddlebag Lake Resort, which is adjacent to the proposed borrow pit mining operation noted above.

Saddlebag Lake Resort is a 55 plus community. Many of the property owners in the community live there year round, while the majority are winter residents. I have been selling homes and lots in Saddlebag for over eleven years. A lot of people buy homes in the resort after visiting with family or friends who own there; they see the well maintained grounds and enjoy the many amenities that are offered. There are families who have owned a home or winter residence there for decades, forming a part of the legacy of their ancestors.

As a Realtor who is in the resort practically daily throughout the winter season, and who goes there regularly year round, I am very concerned about the safety, quality of life and property values of the owners, which I believe would be negatively impacted if the mining project is allowed to commence.

My biggest concern is for the safety of the residents. All of them are in the senior category, living out the remaining years of their lives in what has been a safe environment. However, the only road out of the resort is Highway 60, and with the significantly heavier truck traffic associated with the mining operation, I believe these seniors would be put in harms way while simply trying to go to the grocery store, or a doctor's appointment.

There is of course the concern for an increased noise level from the truck traffic as well, while on the proposed mine property,

in addition to the very real possibility of air pollution and dust formed by mining operations, all of which would affect the quality of life in the resort.

Studies show that the closer a property is to a borrow pit, the greater the reduction in value. This effect is not linear: values decrease more sharply the nearer the property is to the source. The percentage of value loss has been known to be as much as 30% for homes located less than a mile away. Saddlebag Lake Resort is adjacent to the proposed borrow pit property.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully request the borrow pit mining operation not be allowed to take place at the proposed site.

Kris Bender, Broker
Bender Realty, LLC
234 E. Bullard Ave.
Lake Wales, FL 33853
863-223-8708 Office
863-521-9421 Cell

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:31 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine Case Number LDCU-2025-29

From: Tamara Breeden <tamara@breedencpa.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 8:18 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine Case Number LDCU-2025-29

[You don't often get email from tamara@breedencpa.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,
I/We, the undersigned resident(s) of Saddlebag Lake Resort, are writing to express my/our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

Stuart & Tamara Breeden
5066 Saddlebag Lake Road
37 Queen of Waters
Lake Wales, FL 33898

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:32 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to LDCU 2025-29

From: Sheila <ladypokemom1@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 8:53 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to LDCU 2025-29

[You don't often get email from ladypokemom1@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear Sir:

Re: Opposition to LDCU 2025-29

I am vehemently opposed to the "borrow site" being planned along Rt. 60 in Lake Wales. This will directly abutt an extreme number of properties in SaddleBag Lake Resort. We are an almost 800 unit retirement community in which there are plenty of year round residents. We are not a seasonal campground. We have a majority of manufactured homes, or remodeled units for year round living, on lots owned by the residents. There are only a minority of lots for drive-in trailers.

Have any planning people actually looked at the site and how close our adjacent community is before proposing this location?

Reasons to be against this dig site:

- 1) Environmental concerns about breathing in harmful & potentially toxic dust for every resident in Saddlebag, all who are over 55 years.
- 2) Concerns with disruption to our water table. This will be permanent and unfixable for our residents.
- 3) Truck traffic - adding 500-600 trucks daily to an already congested Rt. 60 is not safe. We have trouble getting out of our only community road now because of speeding vehicles. Also, just down the road, we already have a commercial business with many long trailers & heavy trucks entering Rt. 60. That already makes for very hazardous driving. And there is an incline in our part of Rt. 60 that makes decreased visibility a factor.
- 4) Noise - a commercial borrow site next door to people's homes defy logic.
- 5) Decreased property value: The 800 residents own their property at Saddlebag. We not adverse to developing this property, but perhaps with houses, not a dig site.

Please don't put this proposed borrow site in this location for the above reasons. Thank you.

Sheila Montanti
 23 Woodruff Way
 Saddlebag Lake Resort
 Lake Wales, FL.

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:32 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Re: Case LDCU-2025-29

From: Susan Eubank <12baltimoreravens@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 11:23 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Re: Case LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from 12baltimoreravens@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

On Fri, Nov 28, 2025 at 5:46 PM Susan Eubank <12baltimoreravens@gmail.com> wrote:
My letter to the Polk County Planning Commission:

November 28, 2025

Land Development Division

Drawer GM03, P.O. Box 9005

Bartow, Florida

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission

Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Susan Eubank, and I am a resident and homeowner in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+

retirement community in Lake Wales. I'm writing to strongly oppose the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres immediately next to our neighborhood.

Saddlebag Lake Resort includes nearly 800 homes, and unlike many retirement communities, we each own the land our homes sit on. We are a peaceful, residential community built around a lake. This proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property value, and environment of our residents.

1. Major Error in the Application: Our Community Is Residential, NOT "Leisure Recreation"

One of the most serious problems with the applicant's submission is the incorrect description of our community's zoning. The Conditional Use application refers to Saddlebag Lake Resort as "Leisure Recreation." This is factually incorrect.

Our properties — including my own — are classified as Residential on our Polk County property tax records. Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a campground, a part-time leisure park, or a transient recreational area. It is a fully established, permanent residential neighborhood where seniors live year-round.

Mislabeling our community as "Leisure Recreation" minimizes the fact that the proposed mining operation would be placed directly beside hundreds of full-time residential homes, not a recreational park. This misclassification has a direct impact on land-use compatibility assessments and should be considered a serious flaw in the application.

We ask that the County recognize this mistake and evaluate the proposal using the correct and legally accurate zoning classification: Residential.

2. Air Quality and Health Concerns for Seniors

Many residents are older adults living with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other breathing issues. Dust and fine particulate matter from a borrow pit — even with controls — can drift directly into our community.

For seniors, this is not a small inconvenience; it is a serious health threat. Poor air quality can trigger respiratory distress, worsen chronic illnesses, and lead to emergency medical situations.

3. Our Lake and Outdoor Lifestyle Will Be Harmed

Our homes and social life revolve around Saddlebag Lake. Dust, noise, and vibration from mining will disrupt:

- Fishing and boating
- Water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitat
- Outdoor activities
- Peaceful enjoyment of our lakefront environment

We moved here for quiet, clean outdoor living — not industrial activity.

4. Noise, Vibration, and Industrial Disturbance

A major borrow pit would bring:

- Constant heavy machinery
- Backup alarms
- Engines and digging equipment
- Ground vibration
- Early morning and long-hour operations

This is completely incompatible with a senior retirement community.

5. Highway 60 Safety — 536 Trucks a Day Will Increase Accidents and Fatalities

Highway 60 just east of Lake Wales is already known by residents as a dangerous, high-accident stretch of road. Many of us have witnessed serious crashes, emergency responses, and multi-vehicle accidents along this corridor for years.

The proposed mining operation plans to add approximately 268 heavy trucks per day entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks will be pulling out onto a fast-moving highway where vehicles often travel over 60 mph.

Heavy trucks:

- Accelerate slowly
- Restrict visibility
- Create dangerous merging points
- Require long stopping distances

For a senior community where many drivers are cautious, slower, or have mobility or vision limitations, this presents an unacceptable risk. Adding hundreds of industrial trucks daily will almost certainly lead to more crashes — and potentially more fatalities.

Highway 60 is not designed for this level of industrial traffic near residential zones.

6. Serious Threats to Our Private Well-Water Supply

This issue is critical.

Saddlebag Lake Resort operates its own private well-water and sewer systems. We do not have access to city water. A borrow pit of this size adjacent to our homes risks:

- Lowering the water table, reducing or cutting off well-water availability
- Contaminating the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediment, or subsurface materials
- Altering underground water flow, pulling contaminants toward our community wells
- Permanent damage to our drinking-water supply

If our well water becomes unsafe or depleted, all 800 homes lose safe drinking water — with no alternative source. For seniors, this could quickly become a life-threatening crisis.

7. Loss of Property Value for Land-Ownning Seniors

Since we own our homes and the land beneath them, any decrease in property value directly harms us.

A borrow pit next door will significantly reduce home values. Many residents here live on fixed incomes and cannot afford to lose the equity they worked decades to build. If home values drop, many of us will be trapped financially, unable to relocate or recover.

8. Borrow Pit is Not Compatible With Our Area

Even considering the mix of Agricultural/Residential Rural and Industrial zoning surrounding us, approving this Conditional Use directly beside a large, permanent 55+ residential neighborhood is simply not appropriate.

No set of conditions can make a massive industrial mining operation compatible with a senior lakeside

community.

What We Are Asking

We respectfully request that the County:

1. Deny the Conditional Use request
2. Recognize the application's zoning misclassification
3. Protect the health and safety of elderly residents
4. Safeguard our well-water supply and lake environment
5. Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60
6. Protect the property values and financial stability of our community
7. Ensure Saddlebag residents have opportunity for input at public hearings

In Closing

Saddlebag Lake Resort is our home. We worked our whole lives to retire in a safe, peaceful place. A borrow pit of this size, in this location, poses serious risks to our health, safety, water supply, property values, and way of life.

We respectfully ask that you protect our community by denying this Conditional Use request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Susan Eubank

Resident, Saddlebag Lake Resort

28 Saddlebag Trail South

Lake Wales, Florida

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:32 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Strong Opposition to Proposed Borrow Pit LDCU-2025-29

From: Lyn Larson <chuckalyn55@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 5:50 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Strong Opposition to Proposed Borrow Pit LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from chuckalyn55@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)
Polk County Planning Commissioners:

I am a 91 year-old resident of Saddlebag Lake Resort. This has been my permanent home since 1994. My parents bought here and became Florida residents in 1976. I have two children that love our community and are now permanent residents in Saddlebag also.

It is extremely upsetting and frightening to me that Polk County would even consider approving a sand mine/borrow pit and all it entails within 200 feet of our beautiful community.

I strongly request that you reject this proposal immediately.

Lynette M Larson
3 Catskill Circle
Lake Wales, FL 33898

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:37 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: Case # LDCU-2025-29

From: Reves, Lisa <LReves@beckerlawyers.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 12:09 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Cc: Manning, Kimberly <KManning@beckerlawyers.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Case # LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from lreves@beckerlawyers.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good afternoon,

Our Firm represents Saddlebag Lake Owner Association who received notice on the above referenced application. Would you please advise how to access the meeting via zoom or conference call?

Thank you,

Lisa Reves
 Senior Attorney

Becker

Becker & Poliakoff
 625 N. Flagler Drive
 7th Floor
 West Palm Beach, FL 33401

☎ 561.820.2878
 📠 561.832.8987
 ✉ LReves@beckerlawyers.com
 🌐 www.beckerlawyers.com



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Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:37 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Proposed Borrow mine

From: Elaine Snell <elaines8243@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 12:16 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Proposed Borrow mine

You don't often get email from elaines8243@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

I/We, the undersigned resident(s) of Saddlebag Lake Resort, are writing to express my/our strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Road.

Elaine Snell
25 Blue Quill Circle
Lake Wales, FL

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:38 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: Case No.LDCU-2025-29

From: Barbara Marksbury <BarbaraMarksbury@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 1:10 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Case No.LDCU-2025-29

As a full-time resident of Saddlebag Lake Resident, I oppose the approval of the referenced case.

We are a manufactured home community of almost 800 homes who pay taxes in Polk County. Many of us volunteer in the community and support local businesses.

We feel our quality of life as well as our property values will be impacted by the approval of the borrow pit.

Barbara Marksbury
34 Beaverkill Drive
23 Blue Quill Circle
Saddlebag Lake Resort

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Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:39 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: LDCU-2025-29

From: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 11:28 AM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: LDCU-2025-29

MUNI CODE: https://library.municode.com/fl/polk_county

From: Alana Payne <alanapayne1960@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 27, 2025 12:02 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: LDCU-2025-29

[You don't often get email from alanapayne1960@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

My email to Polk County . Please send yours

Dear Mr Grohowski:

I have grave concerns about the proposed sand mine bordering on our community off highway 60. I am a resident and owner in Saddlebag Lake Resort for over 30 years. We are a community of 700 plus homes. We have been surrounded by orange groves since the 1970's and that was a great selling point when we decided to purchase in the over 55 community at Saddlebag and being Canadian this is what we have looked forward to every winter that we have come back to support our Lake Wales community stores and restaurants not to mention the county with our tax dollars.

Many of the orchards around us have been removed and now the last orange groves that border our properties are being looked at for mining purposes.

Our concerns include noise, the existing water table and the impact on our aquaduct system, on the amount of sand and dust engulfing our community. The environmental impact ia also huge.

I have read the Polk County Development Review and am appalled that this proposal even be considered.

Hauling activity would be from 5am to 7 pm. Mining operation itself would be 24/7. The noise and blowing sand impact impact to neighboring homes cannot be denied or even make living there tolerable.

There would be approximately 536 trucks per day 60 % going westbound and 40% going eastbound on a highway

that has been continually riddled by accident after accident. The impact on highway 60 itself would be deadly.

Potable water to the site has not been established yet. We are already having huge water and sewer issues in our community. The implications of changing water tables, ground water run off and aqueduct systems we now have in place could be disastrous to our community.

The LDC defines compatibility as "A condition in which land uses or conditions can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion over time such that no use or condition is unduly negatively impacted directly or indirectly by another use or condition.

Environmentally , the land and lakes around us are abundant with wildlife. The impact of this proposal on our birds, fish and animals is disastrous. There is no compatibility between this proposal and the people or the wildlife.

We do not support this proposal and will do everything in our power to voice our opinions and to stop this proposal from going forward.

Freda Ward

25 Saddlebag Trail North

Saddlebag Lake Resort.

Sent from my iPhone

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:39 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: LDCU-2025-29

From: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 11:29 AM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: LDCU-2025-29

From: Janet Edwards-Tomaselli <edwardsbooks@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 27, 2025 12:25 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: LDCU-2025-29

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: Janet Edwards-Tomaselli <edwardsbooks@yahoo.com>
Date: November 27, 2025 at 10:32:25 AM EST
To: andrewgrohowski@polk-county.gov
Subject: LDCU-2025-29

RE: LDCU-2025-29
 Dear Mr. Grohowski,

Happy Thanksgiving to you and your family.

As is customary on this day, what is on my mind is remembering and giving thanks for all of the blessings that fill my life.

In particular, this morning, I have in mind how very fortunate my husband and I are to be part of our beautiful Saddlebag Lake Community. Unfortunately, only yesterday, Wednesday, November 26, 2025, our community owners began receiving letters advising them of LDCU 2026-29, the proposed borrow pit mining operation directly abutting our SLR community.

While letters were sent only to owners with property lines within 500 feet of the proposed

mining operation, this proposed borrow pit puts our entire community of 800 homes in immediate danger of being irreparably harmed. And yet, we are only given 7 days over Thanksgiving weekend to respond.

According to the plan document, the proposal has already been advanced to the Third Stage of Review, with the next step being approval.

I write to you with a respectful message stating my concern and opposition to this proposal based on the many well documented negative impacts a borrow pit mining operation is known to create.

The full plan document is chilling. Continuous operations of the mine are to be continual, suggesting 24-7 365 days a year with haulage, trucks and traffic, Monday thru Saturday, 5am to 7pm for the next 65 years.

It is a wet mine, using millions of gallons of water and a slurry technique creating enormous amounts of waste, all while Polk County has planned a multi-million dollar desalination operation to fill the need for water to accommodate the explosive growth in Polk County.

In the plan document, Saddlebag Lake Resort is described as a recreational vehicle park, but this misrepresents the many permanent manufactured homes and the year round residents that call Saddlebag Lake Resort their home.

Among the very troubling aspects of this proposal are the well known and documented negative impacts borrow pit mines have on the surrounding ground water supplies. Water is provided in Saddlebag Lake Resort by operating our own water well and treatment facilities. No analysis is provided as to how the proposed mining operation will affect our ground water supply quantity or quality.

It is not hypothetical to imagine an environmental disaster, destruction of property values and complete disruption of the lives of 800 tax paying Saddlebag Lake Resort property owners with this proposed borrow pit mining operation directly abutting our properties.

At an average of \$1000 in real estate property taxes for each of 800 owners, that's \$800,000 that SLR homeowners contribute to the Polk County tax base without sending a single student to a public school. That's as it should be, supporting our community, but our voices should also be heard and our property values and homes protected.

I sincerely thank you for your consideration of my position of opposition to LDCU-2025-29.

Janet Edwards
7 Grayhackle St
Saddlebag Lake Resort
Lake Wales, FL 33898
413-433-5091

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:39 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: LDCU-2025-29 Formal Opposition to Proposed Wet-Mining Borrow Pit Along SR 60 Adjacent to Saddlebag Lake Resort.

From: Mike Syrett <mdsyrett@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 27, 2025 2:11 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: LDCU-2025-29 Formal Opposition to Proposed Wet-Mining Borrow Pit Along SR 60 Adjacent to Saddlebag Lake Resort.

You don't often get email from mdsyrett@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Subject: Formal Opposition to Proposed Wet-Mining Borrow Pit Along SR 60 Adjacent to Saddlebag Lake Resort.

Email transmission dated November 27, 2025

Dear Mr. Grohowski, andrewgrohowski@polk-county.gov

I am submitting this letter to formally express my **strong opposition** to the proposed **wet-mining borrow pit** identified as **LDCU-2025-29**, located approximately **500 meters from Saddlebag Lake Resort** along **State Road 60** in unincorporated Polk County. As a resident and stakeholder, I am deeply concerned about the serious and long-term hazards this project poses to public safety, environmental integrity, and the quality of life for my family, neighbours and hundreds of residents in the surrounding area.

1. Traffic Safety Hazards on SR 60

State Road 60 is a high-speed, high-volume freight corridor with a long history of major accidents. Introducing constant heavy-truck ingress and egress from a borrow pit will:

- Increase the likelihood of severe rear-end and side-impact crashes
- Create dangerous slow-downs on a 60+ mph highway
- Add road slickness from mud, sand, and wet clay tracked onto SR 60
- Reduce visibility due to dust and water spray from mining operations

These hazards directly threaten not only local residents but all motorists traveling the corridor.

2. Groundwater and Lake Impacts

A wet-mining pit excavates below the water table, allowing groundwater to flow freely into the excavation. This threatens the hydrology of nearby lakes, including Saddlebag Lake, by:

- Altering water levels
- Changing water chemistry and clarity
- Increasing the potential for contamination from fuel, hydraulic fluids, and sediment
- Creating new pathways for pollutants into the aquifer system

The proximity of the proposed pit to residential lakes makes these risks especially concerning.

3. Air Quality, Noise, and Public-Health Concerns

Residents within Saddlebag Lake Resort and surrounding neighbourhoods will be exposed to:

- **Silica dust** and fine particulates from excavation operations
- **Diesel exhaust** from heavy trucks and equipment
- **Chronic noise** from pumps, draglines, loaders, and trucks

These impacts are incompatible with nearby residential living—especially in a community with many retirees and individuals with respiratory conditions.

4. Wildlife and Environmental Disruption

The SR 60 corridor functions as a wildlife movement route. Wet mining creates:

- Habitat loss and fragmentation
- Increased animal-vehicle collisions
- Attraction of nuisance wildlife to newly formed, deep open-water pits
- Long-term ecological degradation that cannot be fully mitigated

This location is ecologically sensitive and unsuited to mining operations.

5. Permanent Land-Use Conflicts

Wet pits create long-term problems, including:

- Deep, unfenced water bodies that pose safety hazards
- Reduced property values for nearby homeowners
- Unknown long-term water-quality consequences
- Reclamation challenges that often leave land unusable or unsafe

The lasting footprint of a wet borrow pit is incompatible with nearby residential and recreational land uses.

6. Conclusion and Request

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Polk County Planning Commission to **deny the Conditional Use Application LDCU-2025-29**. At minimum, I request that the County require:

- A full Environmental Impact Assessment
- A comprehensive traffic study specific to SR 60 truck ingress/egress
- A groundwater connectivity analysis
- Extended buffers of at least 1,500 meters from all residences
- A detailed reclamation plan with bonding

The risks to public safety, the environment, and the local community are significant, foreseeable, and avoidable. This site is **not appropriate** for wet-mining operations.

Thank you for your attention and for considering the serious concerns of the residents who will be directly affected by this proposal. I respectfully request that this letter be entered into the public record for the December 3, 2025 hearing.

Sincerely,

Michael D Syrett
96 Silversides Street

Lake Wales FL 33898

Saddlebag Resort - A 55+ Community

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Call, Planner On
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:39 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: LDCU-2025-29

From: Edward Narvid <edward.narvid@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 27, 2025 5:29 PM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: LDCU-2025-29

Dear Mr Grohowski:

My wife and I have grave concerns about the proposed sand mine bordering on our community off highway 60. We are residents and owners in Saddlebag Lake Resort. We are a community of 700 plus homes. We have been surrounded by orange groves since the 1970's.

Many of the orchards around us have been removed and now the last orange groves that border our properties are being looked at for mining purposes.

Our concerns include noise, the existing water table and the impact on our aquaduct system, and on the amount of sand and dust engulfing our community. The environmental impact is also huge.

I have read the Polk County Development Review and am appalled that this proposal even be considered.

Hauling activity would be from 5am to 7 pm. Mining operation itself would be 24/7. The noise and blowing sand impact to neighboring homes cannot be denied or even make living there tolerable.

There would be approximately 536 trucks per day 60 % going westbound and 40% going eastbound on a highway that has been continually riddled by accident after accident. The impact on highway 60 itself would be deadly.

Potable water to the site has not been established yet. We are already having huge water and sewer issues in our community. The implications of changing water tables, ground water run off and aqueduct systems we now have in place could be disastrous to our community.

The LDC defines compatibility as "A condition in which land uses or conditions can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion over time such that no use or condition is unduly negatively impacted directly or indirectly by another use or condition.

Environmentally , the land and lakes around us are abundant with wildlife. The impact of this proposal on our birds, fish and animals is disastrous. There is no compatibility between this proposal and the people or the wildlife.

We do not support this proposal and will do everything in our power to voice our opinions and to stop this proposal from going forward.

Edward F Narvid Jr
Jeanette T Hughes

6 Red Quill Circle
Saddlebag Lake Resort.

Sent from my iPad

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Linda Schultz <lmschultz21@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 4:13 PM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: For Immediate Attention: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Pamela Larson** <pamlarson567@gmail.com>
Date: Mon, Dec 1, 2025, 4:07 PM
Subject: For Immediate Attention: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29
To: <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>, <BeckyTroutman@polk-county.net>, <rickwilson@polk-county.net>, <rickwilson@polk-county.net>, <BillBraswell@polk-county.net>, <MarthaSantiago@polk-county.net>, <MichaelScott@polk-county.net>, <rgibson@lakewalesfl.gov>, <jhilligoss@lakewalesfl.gov>, <andrewgrohowski@polk-county.gov>, <mike@hickmanhomes.net>, <lmschultz21@gmail.com>, <olecowpoke@gmail.com>, <robertbeltran@polk-county.net>

Attention: Polk County Planning Commissioners and Elected Officials

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners and Elected Officials,

I ask for your urgent attention on behalf of residents of your area. My name is Pamela Larson, and I am a permanent resident and homeowner in Saddlebag Lake Resort. My family has lived in Saddlebag for 3 generations since the community was established in the 70's. My husband works at Florida's Natural, a key employer in Lake Wales. My family and countless others in Saddlebag have been productive citizens, working, paying taxes, supporting countless businesses while the document pertaining to this proposal quickly made our community irrelevant, not even noting that we are actual homes and residents.

I'm writing to strongly oppose the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres immediately next to my home and the homes of my neighbors.

Saddlebag Lake Resort includes nearly 800 homes, and unlike many 55+ communities, we each own the land our homes sit on. This proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property value, and environment of our residents and community.

The applicant's submission is the incorrect description of our community's zoning. The Conditional Use application refers to Saddlebag Lake Resort as "Leisure Recreation." This is factually incorrect. Our properties — including my own — are classified as Residential on our Polk County property tax records. Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a campground, a part-time leisure park, or a transient recreational area. It is a fully established, permanent residential neighborhood where myself at the age of 57 live year-round. We have residents from 55 and up living here and we place a massive amount of tax dollars, votes, support of local businesses and events, as do our numerous guests, into the community for decades.

Mislabeling our community as "Leisure Recreation" minimizes the fact that the proposed mining operation would be placed directly beside hundreds of full-time residential homes, not a recreational park. This misclassification has a direct impact on land-use compatibility assessments and should be considered a serious flaw in the application. I ask that the County recognize this mistake and evaluate the proposal using the correct and legally accurate zoning classification: Residential.

I'm also completely surprised how the Story Rd. facility is somehow used as a comparable to this proposal. If you drive the Story Rd. surrounding areas, it is not at all comparable and back when that was approved, far less information was available about what these sites cause. Placing the proposal up against hundreds of homes is not whatsoever a comparable.

Just because one exists does not make another one one **NEXT TO ALMOST 800 HOMES** a good idea, because they are completely opposite.

My mother-in-law is 91 as a Saddlebag permanent resident for over 30 years and has COPD. I have asthma. Dust and fine particulate matter from a borrow pit — even with controls — **WILL** drift directly into our community. **I can't imagine any of you would have that placed next to your mom, your wife, your sister, where your grandkids play.**

These borrow pits have endless research with proven, terminal, non-reversible life-threatening conditions. This list includes lung cancer, TB, chronic COPD. Please research it yourself. **Look up silicosis.** It is frightening. And the proposal would do that to each and every one of us. Poor air quality triggers respiratory distress, worsens chronic illnesses, and leads to emergency medical situations. **We WON'T have the PPE equipment that the slated 7-10 employees working right next to our property lines. They are required to wear it but we have NO safety protocols or mention of health in this proposal. Zero.** Do you know how that feels to be completely discounted when we are a community that has supported your growth, your elections, for decades?

The operating hours of this proposal is to run 24/7. Can you imagine that in your backyard? And to layer in the dust that the prevailing winds will bring in? **And a report that does not cover at all air quality effects, health effects, health safety for actual residents?** That is ALARMING that it has gotten to this stage.

There are further discrepancies throughout the document such as what operating hours start time is and on wetlands being present.

In addition to the grave health concerns and blatant disregard for us as tax paying, permanent, year-round Florida residents of almost 800 homes – larger than many communities in Lake Wales and surrounding areas- the are documented issues of:

- Water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitat -Did you note that the proposed site will interfere with 1 of only 3 special lands in all of Florida and there is a documented threatened plant?
- Noise pollution from constant heavy machinery engines and digging equipment
- Constant sleep disruption from backup alarms, ground vibration and early morning and long-hour operations

I was in complete shock to read that a traffic study for a short period of time did not assess the reality of driving on Highway 60. Now add 536 Trucks a Day that will that will

increase accidents and fatalities. It is already a constant source of accidents, fatalities, and emergency response. We know. We drive it daily. The proposed mining operation plans to add approximately 268 heavy trucks per day entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks will be pulling out onto a fast-moving highway where vehicles travel well over 65 mph. These trucks, as evident all day at the Story Rd facility, accelerate slowly, damage cars, restrict visibility, create dangerous merging points and require long stopping distances.

The serious threats to Our private well-water supply is real. This issue is critical.

Saddlebag Lake Resort operates its own private well-water and sewer systems. We do not have access to city water. A borrow pit of this size adjacent to our homes WILL put in jeopardy: Lowering the water table, reducing or cutting off well-water availability, contaminating the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediment, or subsurface materials, altering underground water flow, pulling contaminants toward our community wells and permanent damage to our drinking-water supply.

If our well water becomes unsafe or depleted, all 800 homes lose safe drinking water — with no alternative source.

Two well respected local real estate agents have noted various ways this will hurt property values. I hope this is not the intention all along was to gain our land hopefully as some have wondered.

I most urgently and respectfully ask EACH OF YOU to do what you know is RIGHT.

1. Deny the Conditional Use request
2. Recognize the application's zoning misclassification
3. Protect the health and safety of residents – **almost 800 homes are WELL OVER 1,000+ residents**
4. Safeguard our well-water supply and lake environment
5. Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60
6. Protect the property values and financial stability of our community

I implore you to not force us to live in these inevitable conditions.

I emphatically request that proposal LDCU-2025-29 is rejected immediately.

Please protect my neighbors. Please protect my family and friends. **Please do what you would want others to do for your family.**

Thank you in advance for placing the residents of Lake Wales **as our most valuable resource**

Sincerely,

Pamela Larson

[5 Catskill Circle](#)

[Lake Wales, FL 33898](#)

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Nance, Ivan
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:27 AM
To: Karen Schuiteman
Cc: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL]: New mining East of Lake Wales

Good morning,

Thank you for your email. More information regarding this will be made available at the Planning Commission hearing.

I will make sure this is submitted into the record for consideration of the Commission.

Ian Nance
 Land Development

From: Karen Schuiteman <kschuiteman@outlook.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 10:59 AM
To: Nance, Ivan <IvanNance@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: New mining East of Lake Wales

You don't often get email from kschuiteman@outlook.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

With regards to the planned new mining operation on hwy 60 East of Lake Wales.

We would absolutely need traffic lights at Intersections such as Walk In Water Rd and Doherty Rd and I'm sure other Intersections.

There are already too many accidents at these Intersections.

I hope this is made a requirement for approval of this new mining operation.

Sincerely,

Karen Schuiteman

Walden Shores resident.

White, Margo

From: Scott, Michael
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:48 AM
To: White, Margo
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: URGENT: Inaccurate Reporting by Development Review Committee puts 800 Senior Homes at RISK
Attachments: visual of property.pdf

Good morning,

Received on behalf of Commissioner Scott.

Thanks,
 Ana



Ana C. Pereira
 Executive Assistant to the Board
 Polk County Board of County Commissioners
 330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01
 Bartow, FL 33831-9005
 863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
AnaPereira@PolkFL.gov www.PolkFL.gov

Please Note: Florida has a very broad Public Records Law. Most written communications to or from state and local officials regarding state or local business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your email communications may therefore be subject to public disclosure.

From: Kathy Pratt <kpratt.the.bratt@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 2:25 PM
To: Troutman, Becky <beckytroutman@polkfl.gov>; Wilson, Rick <RickWilson@polkfl.gov>; Braswell, Bill <BillBraswell@polkfl.gov>; Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>; Scott, Michael <michaelscott@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: URGENT: Inaccurate Reporting by Development Review Committee puts 800 Senior Homes at RISK

You don't often get email from kpratt.the.bratt@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Polk County Commissioners,

I am writing for your urgent assistance with a Polk County Conditional Use proposal, LDCU-2025-29 Mammoth Grove Mine, which is **slated for approval at a Public Hearing on DECEMBER 3.**

I strongly oppose the Conditional Use approval of a sand mine on property which abuts our Residential community of nearly 800 residential homes (Saddlebag Lake Resort). The Polk County Development Review Committee claims that "the request is compatible with the surrounding area as the residential density in this area is very sparse". They have inaccurately assessed the surrounding area land use, as the county Zoning Maps incorrectly call out our community as "Leisure/Recreation". We are NOT Leisure/Recreation land use. We are Residential. We pay Residential Property Taxes on each and every one of our homes. **Sand mines are not compatible with Residential areas and we are requesting that the Conditional Use application be denied.**

Please see the attached file for a visual of the proposed sand mine and its abutment to our residential community.

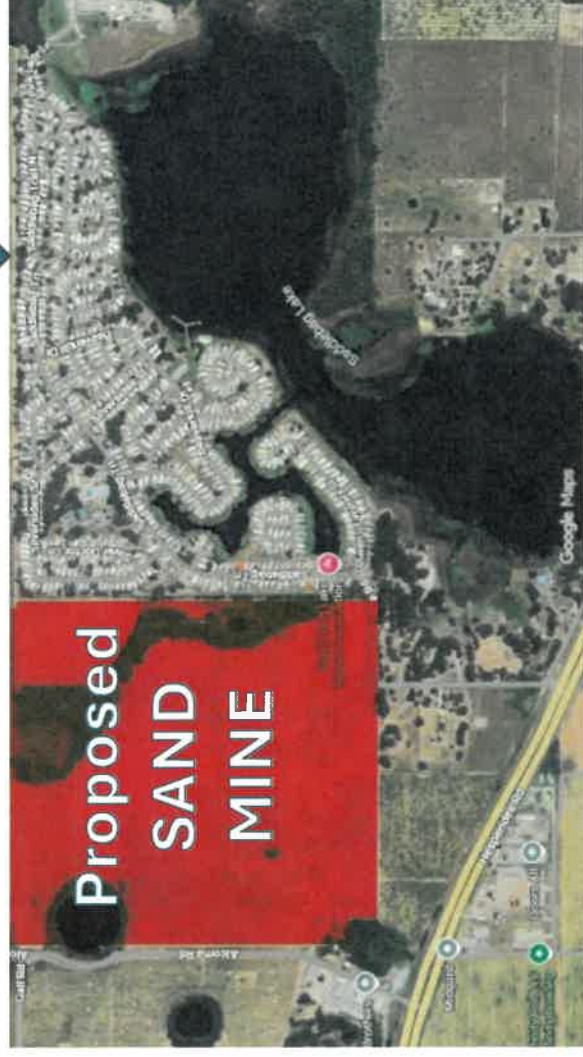
I thank you for your timely assistance in this matter. If you need clarification in any aspect of this matter, please call my cell at 905-440-5121.

Sincerely

Katherine Pratt
Saddlebag Lake Resort Owner and Resident
6 Saddlebag Trail South
Lake Wales, Florida

Reference LDCU-2025-29

**Saddlebag Lake Resort
RESIDENTIAL
COMMUNITY
787 Homes**



White, Margo

From: Scott, Michael
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:08 AM
To: White, Margo
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: PROPOSED BORROW PIT HEARING WEDS December 3, 2025

Thanks,
 Ana



Ana C. Pereira

Executive Assistant to the Board
 Polk County Board of County Commissioners
 330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01
 Bartow, FL 33831-9005
 863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
AnaPereira@PolkFL.gov www.PolkFL.gov

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From: Chris Yust LaClaire <cryust@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 2:05 PM
To: Troutman, Becky <beckytroutman@polkfl.gov>; Wilson, Rick <RickWilson@polkfl.gov>; Braswell, Bill <BillBraswell@polkfl.gov>; Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>; Scott, Michael <michaelscott@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: PROPOSED BORROW PIT HEARING WEDS December 3, 2025

You don't often get email from cryust@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

URGENT, ATTENTION POLK COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29 Proposed Borrow Pit on 855 acres next to our homes

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Christine LaClaire and my husband Perry and I are full time residents and homeowners in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community in Lake Wales. I'm writing to strongly oppose the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres immediately next to our neighborhood. We received a letter from Polk County regarding this last Weds, one week before the hearing and at the start of a holiday weekend! This was not even a fair warning that this was happening to our neighborhood! We are beyond upset!

Saddlebag Lake Resort includes nearly 900 homes, and unlike many retirement communities, we each own the land our homes sit on. Therefore we are Polk County Property Owners and Taxpayers. Many of us are over 70 and deal with health issues prevalent in our age group. This proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property value, and environment of our residents.

Major Error in the Application: Our Community Is Residential, NOT "Leisure Recreation"

One of the most serious problems with the applicant's submission is the incorrect description of our community's zoning. The Conditional Use application refers to Saddlebag Lake Resort as "Leisure Recreation." This is factually incorrect.

Our properties — including my own — are classified as Residential on our Polk County property tax records. Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a campground, a part-time leisure park, or a transient recreational area. It is a fully established, permanent residential neighborhood where seniors live year-round. THIS IS OUR HOME! I own a 3 bedroom, 2 bath modular home and Pay right at \$2000 per year in property taxes that keep escalating year after year!

Mislabeling our community as "Leisure Recreation" minimizes the fact that the proposed mining operation would be placed directly beside hundreds of full-time residential homes, not a recreational park. This misclassification has a direct impact on land-use compatibility assessments and should be considered a serious flaw in the application.

We ask that the County recognize this mistake and evaluate the proposal using the correct and legally accurate zoning classification: Residential.

Air Quality and Health Concerns for Seniors

Most residents are older adults living with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other breathing issues. Dust and fine particulate matter from a borrow pit will be in the air that we breathe 24/7. This is not acceptable! My husband has cancer and can not tolerate poor air quality! No one can!

For seniors, this is not a small inconvenience; it is a serious health threat. Poor air quality can trigger respiratory distress, worsen chronic illnesses, and lead to emergency medical situations.

Our Lake and Outdoor Lifestyle Will Be Harmed

Our homes and social life revolve around Saddlebag Lake. Dust, noise, and vibration from mining will disrupt:

- Fishing and boating
- Water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitat

- Outdoor activities
- Peaceful enjoyment of our lakefront environment

We moved here for quiet, clean outdoor living — not industrial activity. I can't imagine having to live next door to this.

Noise, Vibration, and Industrial Disturbance

A major borrow pit would bring:

- Constant heavy machinery
 - Backup alarms
 - Engines and digging equipment
 - Ground vibration
 - Early morning and long-hour operations
- along with constant noise and heavy truck traffic from 5 am to 7 pm with over 1000 more trucks on Hwy 60 that is already traffic heavy and dangerous!

This is completely incompatible with a senior retirement community. We have a huge part of our life savings in our homes and we certainly don't want to move from our chosen retirement home. With this pit, who would buy our home? No one! Our property values will plummet and we would be stuck.

Highway 60 Safety — 536 Trucks a Day Will Increase Accidents and Fatalities

Highway 60 just east of Lake Wales is already known by residents as a dangerous, high-accident stretch of road. Many of us have witnessed serious crashes, emergency responses, and multi-vehicle accidents along this corridor for years.

The proposed mining operation plans to add approximately huge number of heavy trucks per day entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks will be pulling out onto a fast-moving highway where vehicles often travel over 60 mph.

For a senior community where many drivers are cautious, slower, or have mobility or vision limitations, this presents an unacceptable risk. Adding hundreds of industrial trucks daily will almost certainly lead to more crashes — and potentially more fatalities.

Highway 60 is not designed for this level of industrial traffic near residential zones.

Serious Threats to Our Private Well-Water Supply

This issue is critical!

Saddlebag Lake Resort operates its own private well-water and sewer systems. We do not have access to city water. A borrow pit of this size adjacent to our homes risks:

- Lowering the water table, reducing or cutting off well-water availability
- Contaminating the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediment, or subsurface materials
- Altering underground water flow, pulling contaminants toward our community wells
- Permanent damage to our drinking-water supply

If our well water becomes unsafe or depleted, all of our homes lose safe drinking water — with no alternative source. For seniors, this could quickly become a life-threatening crisis.

Loss of Property Value for Land-Owning Seniors

Since we own our homes and the land beneath them, any decrease in property value directly harms us.

A borrow pit next door will significantly reduce home values. Many residents here live on fixed incomes and cannot afford to lose the equity they worked decades to build. If home values drop, many of us will be trapped financially, unable to relocate or recover.

Borrow Pit is Not Compatible With Our Area

Even considering the mix of Agricultural/Residential Rural and Industrial zoning surrounding us, approving this Conditional Use directly beside a large, permanent 55+ residential neighborhood is simply not appropriate. Please reconsider this and the impact it will have on our community!

No set of conditions can make a massive industrial mining operation compatible with a senior lakeside community.

What We Are Asking

We respectfully request that the County:

1. Deny the Conditional Use request
2. Recognize the application's zoning misclassification
3. Protect the health and safety of elderly residents. Our lives matter!
4. Safeguard our well-water supply and lake environment
5. Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60
6. Protect the property values and financial stability of our community
7. Ensure Saddlebag residents have opportunity for input at public hearings

In Closing

Saddlebag Lake Resort is our home. We worked our whole lives to retire in a safe, peaceful place. A borrow pit of this size, in this location, poses serious risks to our health, safety, water supply, property values, and way of life.

We respectfully ask that you protect our community by denying this Conditional Use request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Christine and Perry LaClaire
Resident, Saddlebag Lake Resort
72 Saddlebag Trail

White, Margo

From: Scott, Michael
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:07 AM
To: White, Margo
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Thanks,
 Ana



Ana C. Pereira
 Executive Assistant to the Board
 Polk County Board of County Commissioners
 330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01
 Bartow, FL 33831-9005
 863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
AnaPereira@PolkFL.gov www.PolkFL.gov

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From: William Mussaw <overallsre@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 10:58 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>; Troutman, Becky <beckytroutman@polkfl.gov>; Wilson, Rick <RickWilson@polkfl.gov>; Braswell, Bill <BillBraswell@polkfl.gov>; Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>; Scott, Michael <michaelscott@polkfl.gov>; pamlarson567@gmail.com; Robin Mussaw <ramwem2@gmail.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from overallsre@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Polk County Planning Commission
 Attn: Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

I, the undersigned resident of Saddlebag Lake Resort, am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed Sand Mine/Borrow Pit. We are a 55 Plus community located at 499 Saddlebag Lake Rd.

Please when considering your vote(s) on this proposed project, think about if you would want this project to be up and running, if your 55 Plus year old parents, grandparents, siblings, aunts or uncles lived in Saddlebag Lake Resort, would you vote to approve this project !

Thank You
William E Mussaw
56 Silversides
Lake, Wales Florida 33898
978-799-9867

White, Margo

From: Scott, Michael
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:07 AM
To: White, Margo
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: URGENT: Inaccurate Reporting by Development Review Committee puts 800 Senior Homes at RISK
Attachments: Sadlebag Lake Proposed Sand Mine.jpg

Thanks,
 Ana

**Ana C. Pereira**

Executive Assistant to the Board
 Polk County Board of County Commissioners
 330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01
 Bartow, FL 33831-9005
 863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
AnaPereira@PolkFL.gov www.PolkFL.gov

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From: Kathleen Henderson <shoeaholic427@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 10:57 AM
To: Troutman, Becky <beckytroutman@polkfl.gov>; Wilson, Rick <RickWilson@polkfl.gov>; Braswell, Bill <BillBraswell@polkfl.gov>; Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>; Scott, Michael <michaelscott@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: URGENT: Inaccurate Reporting by Development Review Committee puts 800 Senior Homes at RISK

You don't often get email from shoeaholic427@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Polk County Commissioners,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing for your urgent assistance with a Polk County Conditional Use proposal, LDCU-2025-29 Mammoth Grove Mine, which is slated for approval at a Public Hearing on DECEMBER 3.

I strongly oppose the Conditional Use approval of a sand mine on property which abuts our Residential community of nearly 800 residential homes (Saddlebag Lake Resort). The Polk County Development Review

Committee claims that "the request is compatible with the surrounding area as the residential density in this area is very sparse". They have inaccurately assessed the surrounding area land use, as the county Zoning Maps incorrectly calls out our community as "Leisure/Recreation". We are NOT Leisure/Recreation land use. We are Residential. We pay Residential Property Taxes on each and every one of our homes. Sand mines are not compatible with Residential areas and we are requesting that the Conditional Use application be denied. This approval would be detrimental to the park as a whole but specifically affect my home due to the proximity of the proposed mine in accordance with my home's location in the park.

Please see the attached file for a visual of the proposed sand mine and its abutment to our residential community.

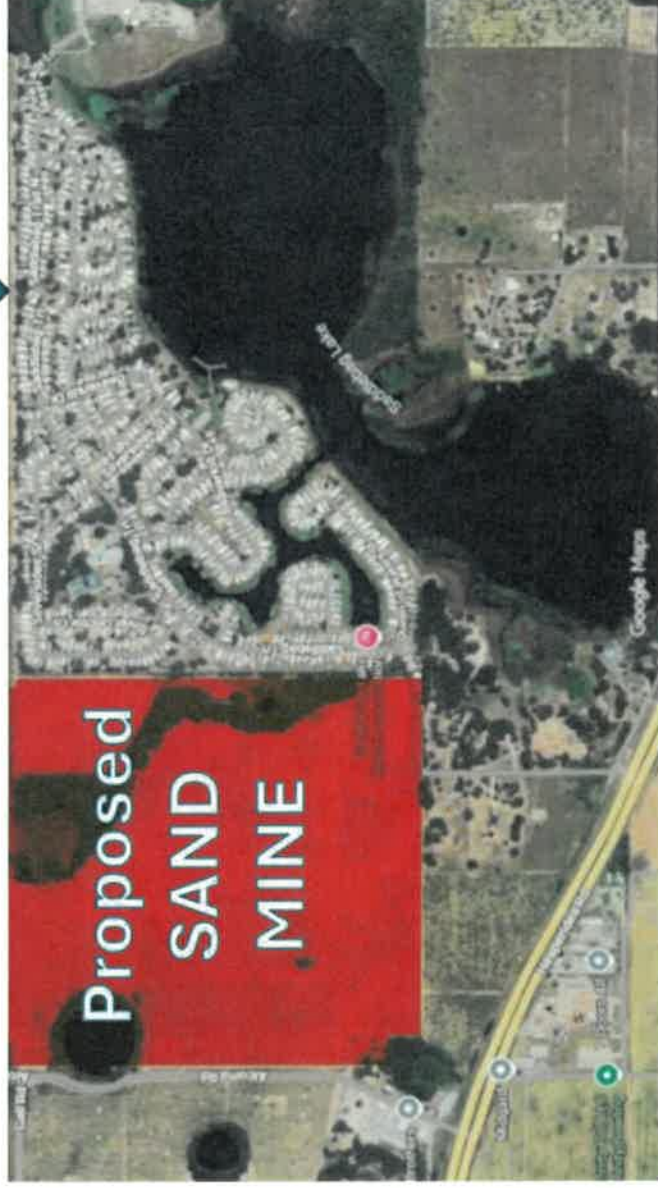
I sincerely thank you for your timely assistance in this matter. If you need clarification in any aspect of this matter, please call my cell at 317-965-0399.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Henderson
Saddlebag Lake Resort Owner and Resident
20 Pink Lady Lane

Reference LDCU-2025-29

Saddlebag Lake Resort RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY 787 Homes



White, Margo

From: Scott, Michael
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:05 AM
To: White, Margo
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: FW: Proposed Mine site beside our community LDCU2025 -29

Thanks,
 Ana



Ana C. Pereira
 Executive Assistant to the Board
 Polk County Board of County Commissioners
 330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01
 Bartow, FL 33831-9005
 863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
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From: ksherwin <ksherwin@rogers.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 4:25 PM
To: Troutman, Becky <beckytroutman@polkfl.gov>; Wilson, Rick <RickWilson@polkfl.gov>; Braswell, Bill <BillBraswell@polkfl.gov>; Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>; Scott, Michael <michaelscott@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: FW: Proposed Mine site beside our community LDCU2025 -29

You don't often get email from ksherwin@rogers.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Subject: Proposed Mine site beside our community

To whom it concerns:

I have grave concerns about the proposed sand mine bordering on our community off highway 60. I am a resident and owner in Saddlebag Lake Resort. We are a community of 700 plus homes. We have been surrounded by orange groves since the 1970's.

Many of the orchards around us have been removed and now the last orange groves that border our properties are being looked at for mining purposes.

Our concerns include noise, the existing water table and the impact on our aquaduct system, on the amount of sand and dust engulfing our community. The environmental impact is also huge.

I have read the Polk County Development Review and am appalled that this proposal even be considered.

Hauling activity would be from 5am to 7 pm. Mining operation itself would be 24/7. The noise and blowing sand impact impact to neighboring homes cannot be denied or even make living there tolerable. There would be approximately 536 trucks per day 60 % going westbound and 40% going eastbound on a highway that has been continually riddled by accident after accident. The impact on highway 60 itself would be deadly.

Potable water to the site has not been established yet. We are already having huge water and sewer issues in our community. The implications of changing water tables, ground water run off and aquaduct systems we now have in place could be disastrous to our community.

The LDC defines compatibility as "A condition in which land uses or conditions can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion over time such that no use or condition is unduly negatively impacted directly or indirectly by another use or condition.

Environmentally , the land and lakes around us are abundant with wildlife. The impact of this proposal on our birds, fish and animals is disastrous. There is no compatibility between this proposal and the people or the wildlife.

We do not support this proposal and will do everything in our power to voice our opinions and to stop this proposal from going forward.

Kim Sherwin
2 Beaverkill
Saddlebag Lake Resort.

Sent from my Bell Samsung device over Canada's largest network.

22
2 Signatures

White, Margo

From: Scott, Michael
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:05 AM
To: White, Margo
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: Inaccurate Reporting by Development Review Committee puts 780 plus Senior homes at Risk - LDCU-2025-29

Thanks,
Ana



Ana C. Pereira
Executive Assistant to the Board
Polk County Board of County Commissioners
330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01
Bartow, FL 33831-9005
863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
AnaPereira@PolkFL.gov www.PolkFL.gov

Please Note: Florida has a very broad Public Records Law. Most written communications to or from state and local officials regarding state or local business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your email communications may therefore be subject to public disclosure.

From: KIM WAGLER <darkay@rogers.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 3:36 PM
To: beckytroutman@polk-county.net; Wilson, Rick <RickWilson@polkfl.gov>; Braswell, Bill <BillBraswell@polkfl.gov>; Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>; Scott, Michael <michaelscott@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Inaccurate Reporting by Development Review Committee puts 780 plus Senior homes at Risk - LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from darkay@rogers.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Polk County Commissioners:

Inaccurate Reporting by Development Review Committee puts 780 plus senior homes at Risk – LDCU-2025-29

We strongly oppose the Conditional Use approval of a sand mine on the property which abuts our residential community of 780 plus homes (Saddlebag Lake resort). The Polk County Development review Committee claims that "the request is compatible with the surrounding area as the residential density in this area is very sparse. This is not true, our community has approximately 1500 residents bigger than towns such as Babson Park, Indian Lakes, Waverly and Bradley Junction to new a few. We are NOT a Leisure/Recreation land use. We pay residential taxes on each and every one of our homes. **Sand mines are not compatible with Residential areas and we are requesting that the Conditional Use application be denied.**

We have many concerns which include noise, the existing water table and the impact on our aqua duct system, the amount of sand and dust engulfing our community. Silica dust can cause severe health issues - when these particles enter the lungs it makes it difficult to take in oxygen and for those who develop Silicosis there is no cure.

We do not and will not support this proposal and we will do everything in our power to voice our opinions and work to stop this proposal from going forward.

WE ARE SADDLEBAG STRONG.

Thank you
Kim and Bill Wagler
48 Silversides
Saddlebag Lake Resort

White, Margo

From: Scott, Michael
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:48 AM
To: White, Margo
Subject: FW: LDCU-2025-29

Thanks,
 Ana



Ana C. Pereira
 Executive Assistant to the Board
 Polk County Board of County Commissioners
 330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01
 Bartow, FL 33831-9005
 863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
AnaPereira@PolkFL.gov www.PolkFL.gov

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From: Lucy Lucy <lucy_lucy3@msn.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 2:41 PM
To: Troutman, Becky <beckytroutman@polkfl.gov>; Wilson, Rick <RickWilson@polkfl.gov>; billbrasswell@polk-county.net; Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>; Scott, Michael <michaelscott@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: LDCU-2025-29

Some people who received this message don't often get email from lucy_lucy3@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good afternoon Commissioners. My name is Christine Humber, and I am a resident and homeowner in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community with nearly 800 homes. I am here today to strongly urge you to deny the Conditional Use request for the Mammoth Grove borrow pit.

This mine would sit **directly beside a full-time residential neighborhood of seniors**—not a campground, not a leisure park, not a seasonal area. Yet the applicant incorrectly labeled our community as “Leisure Recreation.” This is a **serious factual error**. Polk County property records clearly show that Saddlebag Lake Resort is zoned

Residential. Misclassifying us minimizes the real impact on hundreds of permanent homes and calls into question the accuracy of the entire application.

First, this project threatens the health of our residents. Many of us live with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other chronic respiratory conditions. Dust and fine particulate matter from a borrow pit will drift into our community, regardless of controls. For seniors, this isn't an inconvenience; it's a **serious and predictable health danger** that can trigger emergency medical events.

Second, our lake and outdoor environment will be permanently harmed. Our lives revolve around Saddlebag Lake—fishing, boating, wildlife, peaceful outdoor living. Noise, vibration, and airborne dust from mining will damage the lake ecosystem and destroy the quiet environment we intentionally chose for our retirement.

Third, Highway 60 will become far more dangerous. This roadway already experiences frequent accidents. The mine proposes **268 heavy truck trips per day** entering and exiting a high-speed highway. Slow-moving trucks, limited visibility, and long stopping distances create a dangerous combination—especially for older drivers. Adding this traffic will almost certainly increase collisions and fatalities.

Fourth, our water supply is at risk. Saddlebag Lake Resort relies entirely on private wells. We have no city water backup. A borrow pit of this size threatens to lower the water table, contaminate the aquifer, and permanently disrupt underground water flow. If our wells fail, over 800 homes lose their only source of drinking water. This alone should make the proposal unacceptable.

Finally, a large industrial mining operation is simply incompatible with a permanent senior residential community. Property values will fall, quality of life will be damaged, and seniors on fixed incomes will bear the financial consequences.

For all these reasons—health, safety, water, property value, environmental harm, and the applicant's zoning misclassification—I respectfully urge you to deny this Conditional Use request.

Thank you for your time and for protecting the residents of Saddlebag Lake Resort.

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Linda Schultz <lmschultz21@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:00 AM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: Case#LDCU-2025-29; Conditional Approval of Proposed Sand Mining Operation

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Diane Sawyer <kittywo9@yahoo.com>
Date: Sun, Nov 30, 2025, 3:34 PM
Subject: Re: Case#LDCU-2025-29; Conditional Approval of Proposed Sand Mining Operation
To: lmschultz21@gmail.com <lmschultz21@gmail.com>

I am the owner of a home in Saddlebag Lake Resort, and I am writing to express my strong disagreement with the Planning and Development Review Commission's "Conditional Approval" of the proposed sand mine that will abut our Resort's property and to ask the Planning Commission to reverse their decision.

First of all, the Commission states in its review packet that all activities at the mine "shall be conducted in a manner that will minimize adverse effects on water quality, fish and wildlife and adjacent sites."

Further, "the decision to permit the activity shall be based on an evaluation of compatibility of use with surrounding land uses and the ability to mitigate adverse impacts, including noise, airborne and water pollutants and traffic impacts."

"Compatibility" (as defined in Section 4.400 of the Polk County Land Development Code) with surrounding land uses means "land uses can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion."

Production facts in the approval documents:

1. The mine will operate seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Product will be shipped six days a week (312 days per year), 14 hours per day by an average of 536 trucks per day.
2. An estimate of 1,000,000 TONS of product will be produced each year, an average of 2,740 TONS per day.
3. Each TON of product will contain 10 gallons of water, a total of 27,400 gallons of water per day and 10,001,000 gallons per year which will need to be replenished by the Floridian aquifer.

My reasons for opposing the final approval of this application are:

1. By definition, it is not "compatible" with our Resort's "coexistence" in a "stable fashion" with the mine operation. Our property values will plummet in an already rough economy. No one will want to either rent or buy in our community if we are adjacent to clouds of silica dust, intense noise pollution,

soil contamination, threats to flora and fauna, endangered or not, and the disruption of a harmonious ecosystem.

2. Water table depletion: why should every resident that relies on the lake/water/aquifer system suffer the pollution and depletion that is bound to be a consequence of removing 10+million gallons of water each year?

3. The application cites as support a similar approval in 1991 for a similar operation. 36 years have passed since then, with a sharpened awareness of the environment and our responsibility to maintain it. In addition, our Resort has changed during that time from an RV-type “park” to a community in which most residents are either full-time residents or six-months-plus residents.

4. Endangered species: The project has identified one endangered plant species, but apparently has not investigated further, since the document states that “Prior to the commencement of mining activities, the applicant shall hire a qualified professional to conduct a site survey/walkover to ensure that no threatened or endangered plant or animal species exist on the site.” Please note that this “site survey/walkover” will occur after approval.

5. Our Board and some residents received less than a week’s notice about this approval and the final hearing.

6. With 800 homes in our Resort, and over 1,000 residents, I wonder how the Commissioners could state that “residential density is very sparse.”

7. As a Commissioner, elected or appointed, I doubt very much you would want this operation next door to where you live.

I urge you to deny final approval for this project. Thank you for listening.

Scott and Diane Sawyer

8 Saddlebag Trail

Saddlebag Lake Resort

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

19
With 2 signatures

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Linda Schultz <lmschultz21@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:00 AM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Fwd: Case # LDCU-2025-29 Mammoth Grove Mine Opposition Letter

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Lori Garcia <sunbirdsx2@hotmail.com>
Date: Sun, Nov 30, 2025, 3:50 PM
Subject: Case # LDCU-2025-29 Mammoth Grove Mine Opposition Letter
To: PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>, andrewgrohowski@polk-county.net <andrewgrohowski@polk-county.net>, robertbeltran@polk-county.net <robertbeltran@polk-county.net>, mike@hitmanhomes.com <mike@hitmanhomes.com>, lmschultz21@gmail.com <lmschultz21@gmail.com>, olecowpoke@gmail.com <olecowpoke@gmail.com>

Land Development Division

Andrew Grohowski Planer on call

Members of the Polk County Planning Commission and Development Review Commission , Mike Hickman, Linda Schultz and Mike Schmidt

Chair of the Polk County Planning Commission and Development Review Commission Robert Beltran

November 30, 2025

Land Development Division

Drawer GM03, P.O. Box 9005

Bartow, Florida

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission

Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Loretta Garcia and I am a resident and homeowner in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community in Lake Wales. I'm writing to strongly oppose the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres immediately next to our neighborhood.

Saddlebag Lake Resort includes nearly 800 homes, and unlike many retirement communities, we each own the land our homes sit on. We are a peaceful, residential community built around a lake. This proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property value, and environment of our residents.

1. Major Error in the Application: Our Community Is Residential, NOT "Leisure Recreation"

One of the most serious problems with the applicant's submission is the incorrect description of our community's zoning. The Conditional Use application refers to Saddlebag Lake Resort as "Leisure Recreation." This is factually incorrect.

Our properties — including my own — are classified as Residential on our Polk County property tax records. Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a campground, a part-time leisure park, or a transient recreational area. It is a fully established, permanent residential neighborhood where seniors live year-round.

Mislabeling our community as "Leisure Recreation" minimizes the fact that the proposed mining operation would be placed directly beside hundreds of full-time residential homes, not a recreational park. This misclassification has a direct impact on land-use compatibility assessments and should be considered a serious flaw in the application.

We ask that the County recognize this mistake and evaluate the proposal using the correct and legally accurate zoning classification: Residential.

2. Air Quality and Health Concerns for Seniors

Many residents are older adults living with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other breathing issues. Dust and fine particulate matter from a borrow pit — even with controls — can drift directly into our community.

For seniors, this is not a small inconvenience; it is a serious health threat. Poor air quality can trigger respiratory distress, worsen chronic illnesses, and lead to emergency medical situations.

3. Our Lake and Outdoor Lifestyle Will Be Harmed

Our homes and social life revolve around Saddlebag Lake. Dust, noise, and vibration from mining will disrupt:

- Fishing and boating
- Water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitat
- Outdoor activities
- Peaceful enjoyment of our lakefront environment

We moved here for quiet, clean outdoor living — not industrial activity.

4. Noise, Vibration, and Industrial Disturbance

A major borrow pit would bring:

- Constant heavy machinery
- Backup alarms

- Engines and digging equipment
- Ground vibration
- Early morning and long-hour operations

This is completely incompatible with a senior retirement community.

5. Highway 60 Safety — 536 Trucks a Day Will Increase Accidents and Fatalities

Highway 60 just east of Lake Wales is already known by residents as a dangerous, high-accident stretch of road. Many of us have witnessed serious crashes, emergency responses, and multi-vehicle accidents along this corridor for years.

The proposed mining operation plans to add approximately 568 heavy trucks per day entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks will be pulling out onto a fast-moving highway where vehicles often travel over 60 mph.

Heavy trucks:

- Accelerate slowly
- Restrict visibility
- Create dangerous merging points
- Require long stopping distances

For a senior community where many drivers are cautious, slower, or have mobility or vision limitations, this presents an unacceptable risk. Adding hundreds of industrial trucks daily will almost certainly lead to more crashes — and potentially more fatalities.

Highway 60 is not designed for this level of industrial traffic near residential zones.

6. Serious Threats to Our Private Well-Water Supply

This issue is critical.

Saddlebag Lake Resort operates its own private well-water and sewer systems. We do not have access to city water. A borrow pit of this size adjacent to our homes risks:

- Lowering the water table, reducing or cutting off well-water availability
- Contaminating the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediment, or subsurface materials
- Altering underground water flow, pulling contaminants toward our community wells
- Permanent damage to our drinking-water supply

If our well water becomes unsafe or depleted, all 800 homes lose safe drinking water — with no alternative source. For seniors, this could quickly become a life-threatening crisis.

7. Loss of Property Value for Land-Owning Seniors

Since we own our homes and the land beneath them, any decrease in property value directly harms us.

A borrow pit next door will significantly reduce home values. Many residents here live on fixed incomes and cannot afford to lose the equity they worked decades to build. If home values drop, many of us will be trapped financially, unable to relocate or recover.

8. Borrow Pit is Not Compatible With Our Area

Even considering the mix of Agricultural/Residential Rural and Industrial zoning surrounding us, approving this Conditional Use directly beside a large, permanent 55+ residential neighborhood is simply not appropriate.

No set of conditions can make a massive industrial mining operation compatible with a senior lakeside community.

What We Are Asking

We respectfully request that the County:

1. Deny the Conditional Use request
2. Recognize the application's zoning misclassification
3. Protect the health and safety of elderly residents
4. Safeguard our well-water supply and lake environment
5. Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60
6. Protect the property values and financial stability of our community
7. Ensure Saddlebag residents have opportunity for input at public hearings

In Closing

Saddlebag Lake Resort is our home. We worked our whole lives to retire in a safe, peaceful place. A borrow pit of this size, in this location, poses serious risks to our health, safety, water supply, property values, and way of life.

We respectfully ask that you protect our community by denying this Conditional Use request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lauro Garcia
Loretta Garcia

Resident, Saddlebag Lake Resort

[5005 Saddlebag Lake Road](#)
29 Silversides

Lake Wales, Florida 33898

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Grohowski, Andrew
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 11:42 AM
To: Call, Planner On; Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL]: Proposed mining operation in Lake Wales

For record keeping, please forward the last 5 emails that were only sent to me over to Lyndsay.

Thanks!

Andrew

From: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 11:24 AM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay <LyndsayRathke@polkfl.gov>; Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Proposed mining operation in Lake Wales

From: Dennis Breitigan <802dennis@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, November 27, 2025 10:55 AM
To: Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Proposed mining operation in Lake Wales

You don't often get email from 802dennis@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Reference: Case Overview Hearing LDCU-2025-29

--My name is Dennis Breitigan, my wife and I are retired residents of the Saddlebag Lake community just off Route 60 in Lake Wales. We have been made aware of the review of a proposal by the adjacent land owner to convert existing agricultural land into a open pit strip mining operation.

I have serious concerns regarding this proposal and am dead set against this proposal for reasons outlined in the attached letter.

I am surprised that Polk County would even entertain such a proposal, which puts Florida seniors in harms way!

Dennis Breitigan

802-989-0812

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Pereira, Ana on behalf of Santiago, Martha
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:31 AM
To: White, Margo; Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: FW: LDCU-2025-29

Thanks,
 Ana

**Ana C. Pereira**

Executive Assistant to the Board
 Polk County Board of County Commissioners
 330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01
 Bartow, FL 33831-9005
 863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
AnaPereira@PolkFL.gov www.PolkFL.gov

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From: Lucy Lucy <lucy_lucy3@msn.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 12:45 PM
To: Troutman, Becky <beckytroutman@polkfl.gov>; Wilson, Rick <RickWilson@polkfl.gov>; billbrasswell@polk-county.net; Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>; Scott, Michael <michaelscott@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Fw: LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from lucy_lucy3@msn.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

From: Lucy Lucy <lucy_lucy3@msn.com>
Sent: November 28, 2025 12:22 PM
To: andrewgrohowski@polk-county.gov <andrewgrohowski@polk-county.gov>; planneroncall@polk-county.com <planneroncall@polk-county.com>
Subject: LDCU-2025-29

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine — Case No. LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Ricky Humber, and I am a resident and homeowner in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community in Lake Wales. I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres directly adjacent to our neighborhood.

Saddlebag Lake Resort consists of nearly 800 homes. Unlike many retirement communities, our residents own both their homes and the land beneath them. We are a quiet, permanently established residential community centered around a lake. The proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property values, and environment of our residents.

1. Serious Error in the Application: Our Community *Is Residential*, Not “Leisure Recreation”

The applicant incorrectly identifies Saddlebag Lake Resort as “Leisure Recreation.” This is factually inaccurate.

Our properties—including my own—are zoned **Residential** according to Polk County property tax records. We are not a campground, recreational park, or transient-use community. We are a permanent, year-round senior neighborhood.

This misclassification minimizes the impact of placing a large mining operation directly beside hundreds of full-time homes and undermines the validity of the land-use compatibility evaluation. We ask the County to recognize this error and evaluate the application using the correct zoning classification: **Residential**.

2. Air Quality and Health Risks for Senior Residents

Many of our residents live with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other respiratory conditions. Dust and fine particulate matter generated by a borrow pit—even with mitigation efforts—can drift into our community.

For seniors, this is a serious health hazard, not an inconvenience. Degraded air quality can trigger respiratory distress, worsen chronic illnesses, and lead to emergency medical situations.

3. Harm to Saddlebag Lake and Our Outdoor Lifestyle

Our community’s daily life revolves around Saddlebag Lake. Dust, noise, and vibration from mining will disrupt:

- Fishing and boating
- Lake water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitats
- Outdoor activities
- Peaceful enjoyment of our lakeside environment

We chose this community for clean, quiet outdoor living—not for proximity to an industrial operation.

4. Noise, Vibration, and Industrial Disturbance

A mining operation of this scale would bring:

- Continuous heavy-equipment noise
- Backup alarms and engine activity
- Ground vibration
- Early-morning and extended-hour operations

This is wholly incompatible with a senior residential neighborhood.

5. Highway 60 Safety: Hundreds of Truck Trips Daily

Highway 60 east of Lake Wales is already known for frequent accidents. Many residents have personally witnessed serious collisions along this stretch.

The proposal adds approximately **268 heavy-truck trips per day** entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks must merge into a high-speed traffic corridor where vehicles commonly exceed 60 mph. Heavy trucks accelerate slowly, reduce visibility, and require longer stopping distances—all factors that increase crash risk.

For a senior community with many cautious or mobility-limited drivers, this level of industrial traffic presents an unacceptable danger. Highway 60 is not designed to support hundreds of additional truck movements near residential areas.

6. Significant Risk to Our Private Well-Water System

This is one of our most urgent concerns.

Saddlebag Lake Resort relies entirely on its own private well-water and sewer systems; we have no access to city water. A borrow pit this large, located immediately next to our homes, threatens to:

- Lower the water table and reduce well-water availability
- Contaminate the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediments, or subsurface materials
- Alter underground water flow, potentially pulling contaminants toward our wells
- Cause permanent damage to our drinking-water supply

If our wells are compromised, all 800 homes lose access to safe drinking water—with no alternative source. For elderly residents, this could quickly become a life-threatening crisis.

7. Loss of Property Value for Land-Ownning Seniors

Because we own our homes and land, any decline in property value directly harms us. A borrow pit next door will significantly reduce home values. Many residents live on fixed incomes; they cannot absorb the loss of equity they spent decades building. This leaves seniors financially trapped and unable to relocate if needed.

8. Borrow Pit Is Not Compatible With Our Area

Even with surrounding Agricultural/Residential Rural and Industrial zoning, placing a large-scale mining operation directly beside a permanent 55+ lakeside community is inappropriate and incompatible. No conditions can reasonably offset the risks posed to our residents.

We Respectfully Request That the County:

1. **Deny the Conditional Use request**
 2. **Correct the zoning misclassification in the application**
 3. **Protect the health and safety of elderly residents**
 4. **Safeguard the well-water supply and Saddlebag Lake environment**
 5. **Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60**
 6. **Protect property values and financial stability for land-owning seniors**
 7. **Ensure that Saddlebag residents have full opportunity for input at public hearings**
-

In Closing

Saddlebag Lake Resort is our home. We worked our entire lives to retire in a safe, peaceful place. This proposed borrow pit endangers our health, safety, water supply, property values, and quality of life.

I respectfully ask that you protect our community by denying this Conditional Use request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ricky Humber

Resident, Saddlebag Lake Resort
51 Red Quill Circle
Lake Wales, Florida

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Pereira, Ana on behalf of Santiago, Martha
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:26 AM
To: White, Margo; Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: Case#LDCU-2025-29; Conditional Approval of Proposed Sand Mining Operation

Thanks,
 Ana

**Ana C. Pereira**

Executive Assistant to the Board
 Polk County Board of County Commissioners
 330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01
 Bartow, FL 33831-9005
 863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
AnaPereira@PolkFL.gov www.PolkFL.gov

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From: K Graff <kegraff@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 5:57 PM
To: lmschultz21@gmail.com; mike@hicmanhomes.net; olecowpoke@gmail.com; RobertBeltran@polk-county.net; andrewgroholski@polk-county.net; Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Case#LDCU-2025-29; Conditional Approval of Proposed Sand Mining Operation

You don't often get email from kegraff@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Planning Board Commissioners,

As an owner of a home in Saddlebag Lake Resort, I am writing to request that you rescind the Planning and Development Review Commission's "Conditional Approval" of the proposed sand mine that would flank our Resort's property.

It is clear that you had insufficient and inaccurate information when granting conditional approval.

You now have the facts as to how many densely packed people live right there, rely on the water table, and that almost 800 homeowners pay residential taxes to Polk County on homes and lots that are ever increasing in value.

It should be clear to you at this point that heavy industrial noise, traffic, water depletion, and all the other environmental impacts of this project would completely destroy the economic value and quality of life at Saddlebag Lake Resort. I anticipate most would move, abandoning their homes or lots, dismantling a community that has thrived for more than 50 years. It is obvious that there is no chance of coexistence.

That is a lot of damage for an ill placed project.

Please say no to this project.

Thank you,

Karen E Graff
121 Saddlebag Trail
Saddlebag Lake Resort

Yannone, Lyndsay

14
With 3
Signatures

From: Pereira, Ana on behalf of Santiago, Martha
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:26 AM
To: White, Margo; Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: Case#LDCU-2025-29; OPPOSE the Conditional Approval of proposed sand mining operation

Thanks,
Ana

Ana C. Pereira
Executive Assistant to the Board
Polk County Board of County Commissioners
330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01 Bartow, FL 33831-9005 863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
AnaPereira@PolkFL.gov www.PolkFL.gov

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-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Wilke <pjtmwilke@att.net>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 4:38 PM
To: Mike@hickmanhomes.net; lmschultz21@gmail.com; olecowpoke@gmail.com; RobertBeltran@polk-county.net; Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Cc: janehein@new.rr.com; Molly.oconnell1501@yahoo.com; Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Case#LDCU-2025-29; OPPOSE the Conditional Approval of proposed sand mining operation

[You don't often get email from pjtmwilke@att.net. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Dear Mr. Mike Hickman, Ms. Linda Schultz, Mr. Mike Schmidt, Mr. Robert Beltran, Mr. Andrew Grohowski, and Ms. Martha Santiago:

I am writing to you on behalf of my two sisters, Jane E. (Park) Hein, Molly S. (Park) O'Connell, and myself, Jill L.(Park) Wilke and our families. We are writing to very strongly disagree with the Planning and Development Review Commissions's "Conditional Approval" of the proposed Mammoth Grove sand mine that will abut Saddlebag Lake Resort and respectfully request that the Planning Commission reverse their decision.

Our grandfather purchased properties in the Saddlebag Lake Resort back in the 1970's. Our father inherited those properties and now, with the death of our father in January, 2025, we three girls have inherited the properties, making us third generation Saddlebag Lake Resort owners. Over the roughly 45 years of our family ownership, we girls have

visited Saddlebag many times, and have made friends and enjoyed the amenities that Saddlebag and Lake Wales offer. Now that my husband and I are retired, we are looking forward to traveling to Florida in the month of December to begin our "snowbird" living in the 55+ gated residential retirement community that is Saddlebag Lake Resort.

We very much regret that we cannot be at the December 3rd meeting in person to express our strong opposition to this sand mine.

We oppose this sand mine for many reasons, not the least of which include:

1. The mine is not at all 'compatible' with our Resort's "coexistence" in a "stable fashion." Our community boasts 800 homes with over 1,000 senior citizen residents, hardly sparse population density. Saddlebag is misrepresented in the proposal as a 'leisure recreation' area. We are not. We are a gated, 55+ retirement residential area. We own our property and pay residential property taxes. Our community is well maintained, friendly, and well established in the area. Now, however, our comfortable way of life will be negatively affected because of the noise pollution, silica dust clouds, soil contamination, and additional traffic that will be added to an already overly congested highway 60 thoroughfare.
2. The community relies on its own lake/water/aquifer system. My sisters, our families, and I are very concerned about the effects that this water guzzling sand mine operation will have on the water table. Pollution and water depletion are obvious negative consequences to a mine that is estimated to remove 10+ million gallons of water each year.
3. The mine will have a negative effect on property values. While we Saddlebag Lake Resort owners pay residential property taxes, HOA fees, and add to the economy of Lake Wales and surrounding communities, who will want to purchase or rent properties in a community whose once quiet existence is now threatened by the issues listed in #1 above?
4. My husband and I are birders. Clearly, the ecology of the area will be negatively affected by the mine's development. Over the years, we have enjoyed watching the migratory birds around Saddlebag. Destroying the surrounding area with mining will certainly affect the local ecosystem. We understand that one endangered plant has already been identified on the proposed site. It seems counterintuitive to approve the proposed mine first, even if that approval is 'conditional', and then require a site survey for additional such issues after the fact of approval. Why the rush?
5. We fail to see how a huge, 65-year operational sand mine will help to further develop the Lake Wales and Saddlebag Lake Resort areas in a positive manner as it seems residential development in Florida is moving into the middle of the state and more people are migrating to Florida from the north. If development must occur, residential development, while affecting the ecosystem in different ways, is certainly more compatible with the residential development already in place at Saddlebag Lake Resort.
6. The timing of the notice (less than one week with Thanksgiving falling within that time table) of this December 3rd approval vote meeting was made to only a small percentage of our residents. Again, we have to wonder, why the rush? Why now? From the documents reviewed, it appears this mining process has been going on for quite a while; yet this appears to be the first formal notice being given to Saddlebag residents. Given that the nature of our property was misrepresented in the mining proposal, I believe more time and consideration to this issue is needed.

Please DENY the final approval for Case#LDCU-2025-29. Oppose the conditional approval of the proposed sand mining operation.

Saddlebag Strong!

Sincerely,

Jill L Wilke

Molly S. O'Connell
Jane E. Hein

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Pereira, Ana on behalf of Santiago, Martha
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:24 AM
To: White, Margo; Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: FW: Letter Opposing Approval of Sand Mine (Case# LDCU-2025-29)

Thanks,
 Ana

**Ana C. Pereira**

Executive Assistant to the Board
 Polk County Board of County Commissioners
 330 West Church St. , P.O. Box 9005, Drawer BC01
 Bartow, FL 33831-9005
 863.534.6422; 863.534.6049
AnaPereira@PolkFL.gov www.PolkFL.gov

Please Note: Florida has a very broad Public Records Law. Most written communications to or from state and local officials regarding state or local business are public records available to the public and media upon request. Your email communications may therefore be subject to public disclosure.

From: Ann Mullen <ann.c.mullen@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 1:51 PM
To: mike@hickmanhomes.com; lschultz21@gmail.com; olecowpoke@gmail.com; RobertBeltran@polk-county.net; Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Cc: Santiago, Martha <MarthaSantiago@polkfl.gov>; ann.c.mullen@gmail.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Letter Opposing Approval of Sand Mine (Case# LDCU-2025-29)

You don't often get email from ann.c.mullen@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To: Mike Hickman (mike@hickmanhomes.com), Linda Schultz (lschultz21@gmail.com), Mike Schmidt (olecowpoke@gmail.com), Members of the Polk County Planning Commission and Development Review Commissions)
 Robert Beltran (RobertBeltran@polk-county.net) Chair of the Polk County Planning and Development Review Commissions
 Andrew Grohowski, Planner II, Polk County (andrewgrohowski@polk-county.net)
CC: Martha Santiago, Ed.D. (MarthaSantiago@polk-county.net), Chair of the Polk County Board of Commissioners

Re: Case#LDCU-2025-29; Conditional Approval of Proposed Sand Mining Operation

I am the owner of a home in Saddlebag Lake Resort, and I am writing to express my strong disagreement with the Planning and Development Review Commission's "Conditional Approval" of the proposed sand mine that will abut our Resort's property and to ask the Planning Commission to reverse their decision.

First of all, the Commission states in its review packet that all activities at the mine "shall be conducted in a manner that will minimize adverse effects on water quality, fish and wildlife and adjacent sites."

Further, "the decision to permit the activity shall be based on an evaluation of compatibility of use with surrounding land uses and the ability to mitigate adverse impacts, including noise, airborne and water pollutants and traffic impacts."

"Compatibility" (as defined in Section 4.400 of the Polk County Land Development Code) with surrounding land uses means "land uses can coexist in relative proximity to each other in a stable fashion."

Production facts in the approval documents:

1. The mine will operate seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Product will be shipped six days a week (312 days per year), 14 hours per day by an average of 536 trucks per day.
2. An estimate of 1,000,000 TONS of product will be produced each year, an average of 2,740 TONS per day.
3. Each TON of product will contain 10 gallons of water, a total of 27,400 gallons of water per day and 10,001,000 gallons per year which will need to be replenished by the Floridian aquifer.

My reasons for opposing the final approval of this application are:

1. By definition, it is not "compatible" with our Resort's "coexistence" in a "stable fashion" with the mine operation. Our property values will plummet in an already rough economy. No one will want to either rent or buy in our community if we are adjacent to clouds of silica dust, intense noise pollution, soil contamination, threats to flora and fauna, endangered or not, and the disruption of a harmonious ecosystem.
2. Water table depletion: why should every resident that relies on the area's lake/water/aquifer system suffer the pollution and depletion that is bound to be a consequence of removing 10+million gallons of water each year?
3. The application cites as support a similar approval in 1991 for a similar operation. 36 years have passed since then, with a sharpened awareness of the environment and our responsibility to maintain it. In addition, our Resort has changed during that time from an RV-type "park" to a community in which most residents are either full-time residents or six-months-plus residents.
4. Endangered species: The project has identified one endangered plant species, but apparently has not investigated further, since the document states that "Prior to the commencement of mining activities, the applicant shall hire a qualified professional to conduct a site survey/walkover to ensure that no threatened or endangered plant or animal species exist on the site." Please note that this "site survey/walkover" will occur **after** approval.
5. Our Board and some residents received less than a week's notice about this approval and the final hearing.
6. With 800 homes in our Resort, and over 1,000 residents, I wonder how the Commissioners could state that "residential density is very sparse."

7. As a Commissioner, elected or appointed, I doubt very much you would want this operation next door to where you live.

I urge you to deny final approval for this project. Thank you for listening.

Ann Mullen

121 Saddlebag Trail

Saddlebag Lake Resort

Tim Breitigan
26 Silversides
Saddlebag Lake Resort
Lake Wales FL 33898

To: Polk County Office of Planning and Development
P.O. Box 9005, Drawer GM01
Bartow, FL 33831

Attention: Sheranda Robinson - Planning Technician
Reference: Case Overview Hearing LDCU 2025-29

My wife (Deb) and I are retired senior citizens who chose to purchase and reside in the Saddlebag Lake community. This community is situated on 180+ acres in Polk county east of Lake Wales on US Rt 60. There are approximately 787 home and 1500+ socially, politically, and financially active seniors that have chosen to make and call Saddlebag Lake their home. It is here that we all hope to enjoy and make these "Golden Years" some of the best years of our remaining lives.

Open Pit or Strip mining is a very invasive and potentially damaging process that could endanger these hopes and dreams. This project will be noisy, invasive to all SLR residents, and invasive to the natural environment including the natural wildlife of this area. This project will most certainly cause necessary and sometimes unplanned inconveniences to the neighboring community of SLR.

In my letter of protest and objection to Open Pit mining I will not emphasize the many negative aspects of this type of project, as many of my fellow residents have or will in their letters of protest. However I will only ask that this convening board act on 3 very simple principals. These basic life principals include 1) Common Sense 2) Respect 3) Decency.

1. Common Sense tells me that no project which could have such potentially dangerous and hazardous effects on our environment, our safety, health and financial well being, be allowed in such close proximity to an existing community. This mining operation will literally be in my back yard and could harm not only my health, but my financial holdings by lowering property values, but also effect my general well being. Not to mention the dangers and destruction to the local environment which could contaminate our water supply and cause the extinction of local wildlife.

2. Respect: One of man's greatest and strongest needs is the desire to be respected by others. Many of the SLR residents are full-time year round residents of Florida, Polk County, and Lake Wales. Most of us are part-time residents who spend 4-7 months in Florida. Many of us register our vehicles and have Florida State Drivers Licences. All of the landowners pay Polk County property taxes and spend part of their retirement incomes at local businesses and help support local activities. We are members of local churches and other organizations and use local doctors, hospitals and have local bank accounts. For these obvious reasons we have certain rights that should be observed.

1. The right to be heard. 2. The right to live a quiet, peaceful, safe and healthy life. 3. The right to live in a good neighborhood of our choice. 4. The right to protect our homes and our rights.

I only hope that the Polk County Office of Planning and Development will recognize and respect those rights.

3. Decency: As a former US History teacher I can recall several dark moments in our country's past that we allowed Government and Big Business to act out of greed, love of money, and the desire for power to make terrible decisions that destroyed the environment, forced people from their homes and stole their lands. I only hope that in 2025 & 2026 that we do not make the same mistakes. Many of our residents are quite elderly and many are 3rd or 4th generation land owners. All came to SLR looking to live out their lives in a safe, healthy, peaceful environment. The decent thing to do is to prohibit any open pit mining this close to an already established community. SLR has been here for over 50 years. I can call on a Higher Power that asks us to treat others like we would like others to treat us. I ask the Planning Commission to put yourself in our shoes and ask who of you would not fight to protect your community, your homes and even your very lives if an open pit mine began operating in your back yard. Do the Decent thing and vote no to Open Pit Mining at this location.

In closing; Will Common Sense, Respect, and Decency win out over the wants of Big Money ????? We will see.

I am very strongly opposed to the land adjacent of Saddlebags Lake Resort being used for the proposed mining operations.

Sincerely
Tim Breitigan
Saddlebag Lake Resident
26 Silversides.

2 Signatures

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Troutman, Becky
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:08 AM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: Conditional Use Permit LDCU-2025-29 Mammoth Grove Mine

From: Darla Stauffer <jdstauffer1917@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 4:49 PM
To: Troutman, Becky <beckytroutman@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Conditional Use Permit LDCU-2025-29 Mammoth Grove Mine

You don't often get email from jdstauffer1917@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Ms. Troutman:

We strongly oppose Use Permit LDCU 2025-20. We are residents, land owners, and tax payers in Saddlebag Lake Resort off Highway 60. This proposed mine abuts to our resort just north of the Highway. Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a "recreational" campground or a transient recreational area as described in the permit documentation. Rather, our properties are classified as Residential on our Polk County tax records. In fact, Saddlebag Lake Resort comprises 800 individually owned tax properties and is a well-established 55+ community where seniors live year round.

In the Use Permit documentation, it states, "The decision to permit the mining activity shall be based on an evaluation of the compatibility of the use with surrounding land uses..." How was Saddlebag Lake and other residential areas evaluated and by what criteria was compatibility established? How does a mine in the backyard of a vibrant 55+ community make sense? Additionally it states that your decision is based on "the ability to mitigate adverse impacts, including noise, visual, airborne and waterborne pollutants, and traffic impacts." How exactly will these all-important, visual, audial, and above and below ground pollutants be monitored in order to be compatible with the mine's neighbors?

The Use Permit also states that "mineral extraction activities shall be conducted in a manner which will *minimize* adverse effects to water quality, fish and wildlife, and adjacent land uses." So admittedly, there will be adverse effects to water quality. Saddlebag Lake Resort relies upon their own water and sewer systems. We do not have city water or sewage systems. What considerations and evaluations of "compatibility" were made for our wells and groundwater tables and that of Cypress and Thomas Lakes, and how will the mining and slurry process "protect the existing wetlands as much as possible?"

In the "Notes" section at the end of the proposal it states, "This staff report was prepared without the benefit of testimony and evidence submitted by the public and other parties at a public hearing." We became aware of this Use Permit proposal for the first time just a few days ago. Forgotten were the people, the taxpayers who live, work, shop and worship in Lake Wales. We are speaking and we are asking for you to protect us and the surrounding environment, we are asking that you deny this Use Permit.

James and Darla Stauffer

5675 Saddlebag Lake Road
Lake Wales, FL 33989

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Troutman, Becky
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:08 AM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: Urgent: inaccurate reporting by development review committee

From: Diane Sawyer <kittywo9@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 5:38 PM
To: Troutman, Becky <beckytroutman@polkfl.gov>; Wilson, Rick <RickWilson@polkfl.gov>; Call, Planner On
 <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>; Scott, Michael <michaelscott@polkfl.gov>; Braswell, Bill <BillBraswell@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Urgent: inaccurate reporting by development review committee

You don't often get email from kittywo9@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Polk County Commissioners,

I am writing for your urgent assistance with a Polk County Conditional Use proposal, LDCU-2025-29 Mammoth Grove Mine, which is slated for approval at a Public Hearing on DECEMBER 3.

We were notified by mail received on Wednesday afternoon on the 26th! Thanksgiving 27th and most places closed until Monday December 1st, giving us exactly 2 days to respond!

I strongly oppose the Conditional Use approval of a sand mine on property which abuts our Residential community of nearly 800 residential homes (Saddlebag Lake Resort). The Polk County Development Review Committee claims that "the request is compatible with the surrounding area as the residential density in this area is very sparse". They have inaccurately assessed the surrounding area land use, as the county Zoning Maps incorrectly call out our community as "Leisure/Recreation". We are NOT Leisure/Recreation land use. We are Residential. We pay Residential Property Taxes on each and every one of our homes. Sand mines are not compatible with Residential areas and we are requesting that the Conditional Use application be denied.

I thank you for your timely assistance in this matter.

Diane Sawyer
 Saddlebag lake owner at 8 Saddlebag Trail

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Troutman, Becky
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:07 AM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay; White, Margo
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]: Fw: Borrow Pit next to Saddlebag Lake Resort

From: Diane Sawyer <kittywo9@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 5:13 PM
To: Troutman, Becky <beckytroutman@polkfl.gov>
Cc: Scott, Michael <michaelscott@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Fw: Borrow Pit next to Saddlebag Lake Resort

You don't often get email from kittywo9@yahoo.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

— Forwarded Message —

From: "Diane Sawyer" <kittywo9@yahoo.com>
To: "planneroncall@polk-county.net" <planneroncall@polk-county.net>
Cc: "BillBraswell@polk-county.net" <BillBraswell@polk-county.net>
Sent: Fri, Nov 28, 2025 at 5:04 PM
Subject: Borrow Pit next to Saddlebag Lake Resort

Land Development Division
 Drawer GM03, P.O. Box 9005
 Bartow, Florida

Attention: Polk County Planning Commission
 Andrew Grohowski, Planner II

Re: Opposition to Mammoth Grove Mine, Case Number LDCU-2025-29

Dear Commissioners,

My name is Diane Sawyer and I am a resident and homeowner in Saddlebag Lake Resort, a 55+ retirement community in Lake Wales. I'm writing to strongly oppose the Conditional Use request for a large Non-Phosphate Mining (Borrow Pit) operation on approximately 855 acres immediately next to our neighborhood.

Saddlebag Lake Resort includes nearly 800 homes, and unlike many retirement communities, we each own the land our homes sit on. We are a peaceful, residential community built around a lake. This proposed borrow pit threatens the safety, health, property value, and environment of our residents.

1. Major Error in the Application: Our Community Is Residential, NOT “Leisure Recreation”

One of the most serious problems with the applicant’s submission is the incorrect description of our community’s zoning. The Conditional Use application refers to Saddlebag Lake Resort as “Leisure Recreation.” This is factually incorrect.

Our properties — including my own — are classified as Residential on our Polk County property tax records. Saddlebag Lake Resort is not a campground, a part-time leisure park, or a transient recreational area. It is a fully established, permanent residential neighborhood where seniors live year-round.

Mislabeling our community as “Leisure Recreation” minimizes the fact that the proposed mining operation would be placed directly beside hundreds of full-time residential homes, not a recreational park. This misclassification has a direct impact on land-use compatibility assessments and should be considered a serious flaw in the application.

We ask that the County recognize this mistake and evaluate the proposal using the correct and legally accurate zoning classification: Residential.

2. Air Quality and Health Concerns for Seniors

Many residents are older adults living with COPD, asthma, emphysema, and other breathing issues. Dust and fine particulate matter from a borrow pit — even with controls — can drift directly into our community.

For seniors, this is not a small inconvenience; it is a serious health threat. Poor air quality can trigger respiratory distress, worsen chronic illnesses, and lead to emergency medical situations.

3. Our Lake and Outdoor Lifestyle Will Be Harmed

Our homes and social life revolve around Saddlebag Lake. Dust, noise, and vibration from mining will disrupt:

- Fishing and boating
- Water quality
- Wildlife and bird habitat
- Outdoor activities
- Peaceful enjoyment of our lakefront environment

We moved here for quiet, clean outdoor living — not industrial activity.

4. Noise, Vibration, and Industrial Disturbance

A major borrow pit would bring:

- Constant heavy machinery
- Backup alarms
- Engines and digging equipment
- Ground vibration
- Early morning and long-hour operations

This is completely incompatible with a senior retirement community.

5. Highway 60 Safety — 536 Trucks a Day Will Increase Accidents and Fatalities

Highway 60 just east of Lake Wales is already known by residents as a dangerous, high-accident stretch of road. Many of us have witnessed serious crashes, emergency responses, and multi-vehicle accidents along this corridor for years.

The proposed mining operation plans to add approximately 268 heavy trucks per day entering and exiting Highway 60. These trucks will be pulling out onto a fast-moving highway where vehicles often travel over 60 mph.

Heavy trucks:

- Accelerate slowly
- Restrict visibility
- Create dangerous merging points
- Require long stopping distances

For a senior community where many drivers are cautious, slower, or have mobility or vision limitations, this presents an unacceptable risk. Adding hundreds of industrial trucks daily will almost certainly lead to more crashes — and potentially more fatalities.

Highway 60 is not designed for this level of industrial traffic near residential zones.

6. Serious Threats to Our Private Well-Water Supply

This issue is critical.

Saddlebag Lake Resort operates its own private well-water and sewer systems. We do not have access to city water. A borrow pit of this size adjacent to our homes risks:

- Lowering the water table, reducing or cutting off well-water availability
- Contaminating the aquifer with fuel, oils, sediment, or subsurface materials
- Altering underground water flow, pulling contaminants toward our community wells
- Permanent damage to our drinking-water supply

If our well water becomes unsafe or depleted, all 800 homes lose safe drinking water — with no alternative source. For seniors, this could quickly become a life-threatening crisis.

7. Loss of Property Value for Land-Ownning Seniors

Since we own our homes and the land beneath them, any decrease in property value directly harms us.

A borrow pit next door will significantly reduce home values. Many residents here live on fixed incomes and cannot afford to lose the equity they worked decades to build. If home values drop, many of us will be trapped financially, unable to relocate or recover.

8. Borrow Pit is Not Compatible With Our Area

Even considering the mix of Agricultural/Residential Rural and Industrial zoning surrounding us, approving this Conditional Use directly beside a large, permanent 55+ residential neighborhood is simply not appropriate.

No set of conditions can make a massive industrial mining operation compatible with a senior lakeside community.

What We Are Asking

We respectfully request that the County:

1. Deny the Conditional Use request
2. Recognize the application's zoning misclassification
3. Protect the health and safety of elderly residents
4. Safeguard our well-water supply and lake environment
5. Prevent dangerous increases in truck traffic on Highway 60
6. Protect the property values and financial stability of our community
7. Ensure Saddlebag residents have opportunity for input at public hearings

In Closing

Saddlebag Lake Resort is our home. We worked our whole lives to retire in a safe, peaceful place. A borrow pit of this size, in this location, poses serious risks to our health, safety, water supply, property values, and way of life.

We respectfully ask that you protect our community by denying this Conditional Use request.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Diane Sawyer
Resident, Saddlebag Lake Resort
8 Saddlebag Trail
Lake Wales, Florida

[Yahoo Mail: Search, Organize, Conquer](#)

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Cristian Mendez <cristian.mendez@cphcorp.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:51 AM
To: Irons, Chrissy; Karacson, Rita; Bustos, Juana
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: LDNON-2025-41: Bond

Good morning,

Chrissy I just left you a voicemail regarding this, please give me a call if you want to discuss. We received the below comment on LDNON-2025-41 from Rebecca Spangler and the comment has not been closed out on the subsequent two reviews.

As of April 1, 2024, to proceed with construction of infrastructure improvements on County property or public rights-of-way, an applicant shall provide a financial security prior to the pre-construction meeting to assure the improvement(s) are completed (LDC section 909). Please create a Performance Surety Project in Accela and upload a signed and sealed Engineer's Cost Estimate, which should be 110% of the estimated total construction costs for improvements. Make sure your surety application is submitted prior to County Engineer Approval.

Can you please advise whether a bond will be required for this project? Improvements within the County right of way are being permitted under LDROW-2025-40. A bond for those improvements will be provided prior to the pre-construction meeting for that permit.

Also, can someone please advise on the status of LDSUR-2025-143?

Thank you!

Cristian Mendez, E.I.

Project Engineer

Cristian.Mendez@cphcorp.com

o 407.322.6841 ext.1068



BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES TOGETHER



Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Grohowski, Andrew
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:32 AM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Case #LDCU-2025-29 Borrow Pit protest email

From: Thad Schafer <tspaws64@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 29, 2025 6:48 PM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Case #LDCU-2025-29 Borrow Pit protest email

You don't often get email from tspaws64@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Andrew Grohowski,

My wife and I are residents in the SaddleBag Lake Resort and we are writing to formally express our concerns regarding Case #LDCU-2025-29, the proposed borrow pit near my community. After reviewing the available information, we believe this project poses significant risks to the surrounding environment, nearby residents, and long-term property values. While we understand the need for responsible development, the location and nature of this operation raise issues that we hope the county will carefully reconsider approving a borrow pit.

The introduction of a borrow pit in such close proximity to established neighborhoods has the potential to fundamentally alter the character and safety of our community. Residents are already voicing apprehension about the environmental degradation, traffic impacts, and diminished quality of life that may accompany this project. Given these concerns, We respectfully request that the county conduct a more thorough review and consider alternative sites.

Key Concerns:

- Increased dust, sediment, and airborne particulates that may harm air quality and public health
- Disruption of local wildlife habitats and potential long-term ecological damage
- Elevated noise levels from heavy machinery and truck traffic affecting nearby homes and communities
- Significant wear on local roads and increased safety hazards due to high-volume truck traffic
- Potential for groundwater contamination or altered drainage patterns

- Decreased property values for surrounding neighborhoods due to industrial activity
- Loss of natural landscape and open space that residents currently enjoy
- Reduced overall quality of life for homeowners due to visual, environmental, and safety impacts

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We appreciate the county's efforts to ensure responsible land use and hope you will take these concerns into account as you evaluate the proposed borrow pit.

Sincerely,
Thad & Ruth Schafer

39 Queen of Waters

--

Thad Schafer
(269)569-0298
tspaws64@gmail.com

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Grohowski, Andrew
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:31 AM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to LDCU 2025-29

From: Sheila <ladypokemom1@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 8:58 PM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Opposition to LDCU 2025-29

You don't often get email from ladypokemom1@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Sir:

Re: Opposition to LDCU 2025-29

I am vehemently opposed to the "borrow site" being planned along Rt. 60 in Lake Wales. This will directly abutt an extreme number of properties in SaddleBag Lake Resort. We are an almost 800 unit retirement community in which there are plenty of year round residents. We are not a seasonal campground. We have a majority of manufactured homes, or remodeled units for year round living, on lots owned by the residents. There are only a minority of lots for drive-in trailers.

Have any planning people actually looked at the site and how close our adjacent community is before proposing this location?

Reasons to be against this dig site:

- 1) Environmental concerns about breathing in harmful & potentially toxic dust for every resident in Saddlebag, all who are over 55 years.
- 2) Concerns with disruption to our water table. This will be permanent and unfixable for our residents.
- 3) Truck traffic - adding 500-600 trucks daily to an already congested Rt. 60 is not safe. We have trouble getting out of our only community road now because of speeding vehicles. Also, just down the road, we already have a commercial business with many long trailers & heavy trucks entering Rt. 60. That already makes for very hazardous driving. And there is an incline in our part of Rt. 60 that makes decreased visibility a factor.
- 4) Noise - a commercial borrow site next door to people's homes defy logic.
- 5) Decreased property value: The 800 residents own their property at Saddlebag. We not adverse to developing this property, but perhaps with houses, not a dig site.

Please don't put this proposed borrow site in this location for the above reasons. Thank you.

Sheila Montanti

23 Woodruff Way
Saddlebag Lake Resort
Lake Wales, FL 33853

Sent from my iPhone

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Grohowski, Andrew
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:31 AM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Proposed Mining Operaton

From: eileen baker <feelgr08@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 8:20 PM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>; Call, Planner On <PlannerOnCall@polk-county.net>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Proposed Mining Operaton

[You don't often get email from feelgr08@gmail.com. Learn why this is important at <https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdentification>]

Re: Concerns regarding Proposed Mining Operation Behind Saddlebag Lake Resort 11/31/25

Dear Polk County Planner,

My name is Eileen Douglas-Baker and I am a resident and new owner at Saddlebag Lake Resort in Lake Wales. I am writing regards to the upcoming hearing for the proposed non-phosphate mining operation that is in extremely close to our community. I ask that this email be included in the public record. I also note that insufficient notice was given to resident of Saddlebag Lake Resort. The notice may be within legal limits, but was short enough to suspect foul play in trying to push this heinous plan through.

Along with my neighbors, I am deeply concerned about the potential impacts this mining operation will have on our neighborhood regarding dust, noise, truck traffic, water usage, water quality, and impact of the serene environment. Saddlebag Lake Resort is located immediately adjacent to the proposed mine area, and seems to hold very little regard by the developer as noted in the 113 page proposal. Here are my concerns:

Dust and air-quality will be poor. I just moved down here full-time to escape the horrific air quality, noise, poor environmental decisions, and polluted drinking water in New Jersey. Why would I want a plant in my back yard? It has ZERO benefit to the quality, health, or environment in our community.

Dust will be settling on roofs, plants, the pool, etc. Dust will force people with respiratory issues to stay inside. I am not satisfied that the dust-control plan is adequate. Have you taken baseline air monitoring tests and what will happen when future tests deviate from baseline? What will be shutdown criteria? Will these tests be made public? I am not convinced that air quality will not deteriorate.

I love the beautiful, active, and serene community. This is why I chose to retire here. Noise and vibration will negatively impact daily living, starting at 5a.m. no less! There is already a lot of road noise from Route 60. Isn't that bad enough?

Water is huge concern. I expect stable groundwater levels. Saddlebag Lake participates with The University of Florida Lake Watch monitoring program. Our lake has been recognized as one of the cleanest bodies of water in Florida. We are committed to maintaining our lake's integrity. There is no outlet to our lake as it is directly connected to the Florida Aquifer. Dredging nearby will adversely affect the lake levels and water quality. Changing in levels can make our boat

docks unusable and compromise waterfront properties. Changes in water quality will negatively impact our fish,

bird, and amphibian populations and habitat. More time is needed to assess these impacts and confirm in detail a review by the Southwest Florida Water Management District and State of Florida Fisheries. What are the limits to be imposed on water quality and levels and what steps will be taken if water quality/levels diminish? What would be a shutdown level? There is no doubt that this operation would significantly reduce our property values. We are a senior living community where people are on fixed incomes and should have the comfort of knowing that their physical assets are safe and protected from decline. I implore you to ELIMINATE THE PARCEL ADJACENT TO SADDLEBAG LAKE RESORT property line. Or establish a 750-ft setback from the Saddlebag Lake Resort property line and establish a sound barrier and reforested buffer in the buffer.

Thank you for your time. I do support responsible development in Lake Wales, and this IS NOT RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT due to the proximity of this operation to our vibrant community.

Please confirm that this email will be included in the official hearing record.

I would appreciate any updates or follow-up documentation regarding this reckless project.

Eileen Douglas-Baker
5620 Saddlebag Lake Road
Lake Wales, FL 33898
Cell- 973-713-9475
Feelgr08@gmail.com

Sent from my iPhone

Yannone, Lyndsay

From: Grohowski, Andrew
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:31 AM
To: Yannone, Lyndsay
Subject: Fw: [EXTERNAL]: Case #LDCU-2025-29

From: Tomi Blackburn <blackburntomi@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 8:13 PM
To: Grohowski, Andrew <andrewgrohowski@polkfl.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]: Case #LDCU-2025-29

You don't often get email from blackburntomi@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)
 December 1, 2025

Dear Polk County Planning Commission,

I strongly oppose LDCU-2025-29 Mammoth Grove Mine which is slated for approval at a Public Hearing on December 3. This use is not compatible with an adjacent 55+ community.

The approval of the Mammoth Grove Mine would have disastrous implications on Saddlebag Lake Resort, a residential community of nearly 800 households that has been a thriving part of East Polk County since its grand opening in 1973.

The Polk County Development Review Committee claims the request is compatible with the surrounding area that is very sparse. Really? Nearly 800 households that have existed and paid county taxes for over 50 years is considered sparse? Did anyone from the Development Review Committee do a site inspection? Apparently not or they would have seen an active adult retirement community with residents enjoying an exceptional quality of life that's a legacy of previous Saddlebaggers for 50+ years. This isn't something to cast aside because of a request for a borrow pit that offers nothing but negatives in every aspect of its existence.

A quick Google search of open pit mining is a litany of woes; noise, air pollution contributing to respiratory problems, water pollution and water table depletion, negative affect on the environment and endangered species, an astonishing amount of increased heavy truck traffic on Highway 60 in the amount of a daily average of 1,072 would obviously increase traffic accidents, and all of these factors would certainly lower home values in Saddlebag Lake Resort. Is this abundance of negative components of open pit mining contributing to a diminished quality of life for senior citizens so insignificant to Dick Crockett, the applicant, and to Polk County Commissioners?

Opposition to the Mammoth Grove Mine isn't an example of "not in my backyard." In 2005, Saddlebag residents came to a Polk County Commission meeting to support the zoning change that would have allowed residential development on our northern perimeter by the Berry Corporation. Last year, we were sad to see the orange groves on our western perimeter bulldozed down and burned but accept

the reasons for change. And, we know residential development is inevitable on that same western border and probably won't be opposed. But a sand mining operation bringing a multitude of problems is not compatible with a 55+ residential community recently celebrating its 50th anniversary as a part of Polk County.

Considering our community demographic is retired senior adults seeking the quiet enjoyment of a healthy, safe environment, I ask the applicant, Dick Crockett, and all Polk County Commissioners the following question? Would you want your parents or grandparents retirement lives to be adversely impacted by the addition of an open pit sand mining operation? Of course you wouldn't. A sand mining pit next to nearly 800 homes in a long established senior retirement community is not compatible so a decision to deny this request is not really that difficult.

Please, I urge the Polk County Commission to deny the request LDCU-2025-29 that allows the Mammoth Grove Mine adjacent to Saddlebag Lake Resort.

Tomi Blackburn
21 Woodruff Way, Saddlebag Lake Resort

1

Re: Concerns regarding Proposed Mining Operation Behind Saddlebag Lake Resort 11/30/25

Dear Polk County Planner,

My name is Patricia Douglas-Jarvis, and I am a resident and owner of two properties at Saddlebag Lake Resort in Lake Wales. I am writing regards of the upcoming hearing for the proposed non-phosphate mining operation located ridiculously close to our community. I ask that this email be included in the public record. I also note that insufficient notice was given to resident of Saddlebag Lake Resort. The notice may be within legal limits, but was short enough to suspect foul play in trying to push this heinous plan through.

Along with my neighbors, I am deeply concerned about the potential impacts this mining operation may have on our neighborhood regarding dust, noise, truck traffic, water usage, and impact of the serene environment. Saddlebag Lake Resort is located immediately adjacent to the proposed mine area, and seems to hold very little regard by the developer as noted in the 113 page proposal. Here are my concerns:

Dust and air-quality will be poor. I get migraines from poor air quality and when the wind is the right way, I get dust from the plant down the road. Why would I want a plant in my back yard? Dust will be settling on roofs, plants, the pool, etc. Dust will force people with respiratory issues to stay inside. I am not satisfied that the dust-control plan is adequate. Have you taken baseline air monitoring tests and what will happen when future tests deviate from baseline? What will be shutdown criteria? Will these tests be made public? I am not convinced that air quality will not deteriorate.

I live in a beautiful, active, and serene community. This is why I retired here. Noise and vibration will negatively impact daily living, starting at 5a.m. no less! There is already a lot of road noise from Route 60. Isn't that bad enough?

Water is huge concern. I expect stable groundwater levels. Saddlebag Lake participates with The University of Florida Lake Watch monitoring program. Our lake has been recognized as one of the cleanest bodies of water in Florida. We are committed to maintaining our lake's integrity. There is no outlet to our lake as it is directly connected to the Florida Aquifer. Dredging nearby will adversely affect the lake levels and water quality. Changing in levels can make our boat dock unusable and compromise waterfront properties. Changes in water quality will negatively impact our fish, bird, and amphibian populations and habitat. More time is needed to assess these impacts and confirm in detail a review by the Southwest Florida Water Management District and State of Florida Fisheries. What are the limits to be imposed on water quality and levels and what steps will be taken if water quality/levels diminish? What would be a shutdown level?

As a 40 year veteran of emergency services, I am appalled to think that you have no problem putting over 500 trucks a day on the already over burdened Route 60. There are serious accidents on that road every day.

There is no doubt that this operation would significantly reduce our property values. We are a senior living community where people are on fixed incomes and should have the comfort of knowing that their physical assets are safe and protected from decline.

I implore you to ELIMINATE THE PARCEL ADJACENT TO SADDLEBAG LAKE RESORT property line. Or establish a 750-ft setback from the Saddlebag Lake Resort property line and establish a sound barrier and reforested buffer in the buffer.

Thank you for your time. I do support responsible development in Lake Wales, and this IS NOT RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT due to the proximity of this operation to our vibrant community.

Please confirm that this email will be included in the official hearing record.
I would appreciate any updates or follow-up documentation regarding this wretched project.

Sincerely,

Patricia Douglas-Jarvis
5744 Saddlebag Lake Resort
Lake Wales, FL 33898
908-256-6957
Lymeez418@gmail.com