

DNR seeks public input on Stearns County aggregate resources maps

Landowners, county staff and citizens interested in the construction aggregate resources of Stearns County can now provide input on draft maps produced by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

The public comment period begins Sept. 1 and ends Oct. 15. Comments can be submitted by mail, email, phone, or fax to Heather Arends, DNR Lands and Minerals, 500 Lafayette Road, Box 45, St. Paul, MN 55155-4045; by phone at 651-259-5376; via fax at 651-296-5939; or by email at Heather.Arends@state.mn.us.

The draft maps depict the potential for sand, gravel, and crushed stone deposits within Stearns County. “The Stearns County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution requesting the DNR to map the county’s construction aggregate resources,” said Dennis Martin, the DNR’s mineral-potential manager. “Having locally available, low-cost sources for these materials is fundamental to providing building materials, maintaining public infrastructure and encouraging private sector development.”

To maintain local supplies of aggregate, the Minnesota Legislature passed legislation in 1984 directing the DNR to identify and classify the state’s construction aggregate resources outside of the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The department also is required to distribute this information to both the public and to local and regional planners. The data is intended to provide general information and to assist communities in making land-use and permitting decisions relating to aggregate resources.

The DNR will use information obtained during the public comment period to prepare final maps, which will be presented at both a county board commissioners meeting and a public open house. DNR staff will be present at both meetings to discuss the results and answer questions related to the aggregate resources in Stearns County. The date and times for these meetings will be announced in late October.

Draft maps can be reviewed in a couple of ways:

- Digital maps can be viewed online at www.dnr.state.mn.us/lands_minerals/aggregate_maps/index.html
- Paper copies can be viewed at any Stearns County Library, or requested from Heather Arends at 651-259-5376.