From: Barb and Larry
To: *EQB_Silica Sand
Subject: SE Minnesota water quality
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It is urgent that the State of Minnesota promulgate and enforce rules that will prohibit and prevent the degradation of groundwater and streams in the bluff country. This unique part of Minnesota provides habitat for several species of trout that have only survived through the past efforts of concerned residents, sportsmen and a few far sighted state leaders. The remaining natural resources, especially the ground and surface water, has survived many threats; deforestation, urban sprawl and poor agricultural practices. Now this special part of our heritage is threatened again by lack of controls on frac sand mining. The citizens of the state value the natural gifts in our region. We need to place the interests of our present and future citizens over the interests of those who want to exploit the resource, make as much money as possible and leave a spoiled and polluted land when they go. Please enact strong rules that will protect the lands and waters of this beautiful part of Minnesota. Specifically, prohibit mining within a mile of any trout stream or tributary, prohibit mining that is less than 25 feet from the water table, and set limits on the use of groundwater so as not to deplete or adversely effect its natural flow. These and other protections will help to alleviate some of the negative effects of frac sand mining. I am a frequent visitor to this area; I go there to see the bluffs, to hike, to camp, to fish and to enjoy the beauty and the bounty of this unique region. I am one of thousands who visit the area each year, spending money and contributing to the state and local economy. We can continue to do this indefinitely if we preserve and protect the environment. The alternative is to go for the short-sighted approach of making lots of money for profiteers, providing jobs for a few years, and leaving the land spoiled, the water polluted and the fish and wildlife decimated. There are hundreds, perhaps thousands of examples of where this has happened in other parts of the country, let's not let it happen here.
Sincerely,
Larry Ellingson
Bemidji, MN

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