

June 16, 2026

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed Storedahl & Sons quarry project off Mabee Mines Road.

I understand that aggregate materials are necessary for construction and infrastructure projects. My concern is not with quarries in general, but whether this particular project is appropriate for this particular location and whether its impacts on local residents have been fully considered.

Much of the discussion surrounding traffic appears to focus on the Salmon Falls Road intersection. While that intersection certainly deserves attention, it is not the only location that will be affected. Truck traffic associated with this project will travel through multiple intersections and corridors throughout the area, including Belle Center Road and Marble Road. Marble Road is of particular concern because of its proximity to a school and the daily presence of families, school buses, young drivers, and other community traffic. Imagine people standing at the Cape Horn lookout or the cliff climbing activity east of Belle Center Road. The speed limit at both locations is already perilous.

The issue is not simply congestion. It is the cumulative effect of hundreds of heavy trucks operating day after day on roads used by local residents for ordinary activities such as commuting to work, taking children to school, walking, cycling, horseback riding, and accessing emergency services. Every additional truck movement increases the potential for conflicts, delays, and accidents. While any single truck may not create a significant problem, the scale of the proposed operation raises legitimate concerns about long-term safety.

I am also concerned that weather conditions unique to our area may not be fully reflected in standard traffic analyses. Residents know that conditions on Mabee Mines Road can differ substantially from conditions along SR-14. Snow, ice, fog, fallen trees, and other seasonal challenges already affect travel in this area. The addition of frequent, heavily loaded trucks has the potential to compound those challenges.

Beyond traffic, I believe it is important to consider the broader character of the area. This project is proposed within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. The Scenic Area designation reflects a collective decision that this landscape possesses value beyond any single property owner or project. The question before the County is not whether aggregate is useful. The question is whether this is the appropriate location for an industrial operation of this scale and whether the resulting impacts are consistent with the qualities the Scenic Area was created to protect.

Those qualities are not limited to what can be seen from a scenic overlook. They also include the experience of the area itself: the quiet roads, the natural soundscape, the opportunity to hear birds, wind through the trees, and the relative absence of industrial activity. The character of a scenic area is shaped not only by what people see, but also by what they hear and experience. Once the quiet character of an area is lost, it is extraordinarily difficult to restore, and that loss should be weighed just as carefully as any economic benefit associated with the project.

The question is not simply whether a quarry can operate at this location. The question is what this project transforms the surrounding community into. Today, these roads primarily serve local purposes: residents traveling to work, children going to school, emergency services, agricultural activities, recreation, and access to homes and businesses. Under the proposed project, those same roads would become a transportation corridor whose primary purpose is moving aggregate from the quarry to markets elsewhere.

In effect, a rural residential area would be converted into an industrial conveyor belt, with hundreds of truck trips each day passing through the community. That is a significant change in the character and function of the area, and it deserves careful consideration. The impacts are not confined to the quarry site. Residents throughout the transportation corridor become part of the operation's daily footprint. Whether traveling to work, taking children to school, walking along local roads, riding horses, responding to emergencies, or simply enjoying the quiet character of the area, community members would be required to accommodate and coexist with the continuous movement of industrial traffic. In that sense, the effects of the project extend well beyond the property boundaries of the quarry itself and become part of everyday life throughout the surrounding community.

It is also worth considering who benefits and who bears the consequences. Those who profit from the extraction and sale of the aggregate may spend relatively little time experiencing the daily impacts of the operation. Those impacts will instead be experienced by the residents who live along the transportation corridor, use these roads every day, send their children to local schools, and have chosen to make their homes in this community. Any evaluation of the project should weigh both sides of that equation.

For that reason, I encourage the County to carefully evaluate not only the direct impacts of the quarry itself, but also the cumulative effects of truck traffic, noise, dust, visual impacts, potential effects on groundwater, and the long-term consequences for neighboring properties and communities.

I appreciate the work involved in reviewing a proposal of this scale and the responsibility of balancing competing interests. My request is simply that the County give careful consideration to the safety, environmental, and quality-of-life concerns raised by residents before making a final decision.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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