

Center Point Rock Crusher Permit Application Withdrawn

January 15, 2009

If you're familiar with the Center Point area of the Guad (downstream of Kerrville), you'll know about the ugly moonscape of a scar on the land mostly on river left just upstream of Center Point, TX. (On Google Earth it's the big white spot ~8 miles downstream of Kerrville, right on the river). A couple of years ago a grassroots group of citizens in C.P. formed G.R.E.A.T, Guadalupe River Environmental Action Team, to combat the Wheatcraft rock crushing operation there. A tremendous amount of sediment was flowing into the river but the noise from its 24-7 rock crusher was driving the citizens crazy and the dust was the culprit in an excessively high rate of asthma and pulmonary problems in Center Point elementary school children. In fact, Wheatcraft was operating it without a TCEQ permit! GREAT asked Texas Rivers Protection Assoc. (TRPA) for assistance and TRPA granted it \$2500 seed money and use of its 501(c)3 to funnel donations. A TCEQ hearing was requested and TRPA contested the hearing. In the meantime the rock crusher went silent. Finally people could sleep and children could study in quiet at school. Time went by, slowly, Mr. Wheatcraft died, his family took over the gravel operation. Here's how it played out...

Update: January 15, 2009

Today was to be the first day of a lengthy (and expensive) contested case hearing regarding the Center Point Rockcrusher (a facility that we have been fighting that would have been located right on the banks of the Guadalupe River at Center Point). I really wasn't looking forward to it. And, considering the recent decisions of the TCEQ, I really didn't have much hope for a good outcome.

But miracles do happen. And, earlier this week we learned that the applicant for the rockcrusher permit had withdrawn his application. There will be no contested case hearing (or at least, not in the near future). If the applicant wants to apply again he will have to begin at the beginning, and it will take a long time.

We can only assume that the prospect of a long and costly hearing, along with the slow down in construction, must have expedited this victory.

We especially want to thank John and Cayce Kovacs, who led the fight against the rockcrusher for so long, and all the locals in Center Point who donated the money to fund this battle and then held in there to the end.

Now, this does not mean that the siltation problems there have come to an end. The gravel pits are still in operation. Maybe there is something we can still do about that.

Tom Goynes
President, Texas Rivers Protection Association

<http://www.txrivers.org>

Wheatcraft Corp., Center Point, TX

