

Talking points: RCH Mine Hearing

Resource Conservation Holdings seeks zoning approval for a 1,365 acre mining operation on Corkscrew Road. This operation is opposed by residents and environmental groups for many reasons, including:

- The proposed mining operation anticipates nearly 3000 dump truck trips per day on Corkscrew Road. This concentration of dump trucks will result in dramatic changes to the nature of the corridor traffic from commuter to industrial and will adversely affect the community character of Corkscrew and Estero. In addition, it will lead to increased incidental deaths of federally listed endangered wildlife species like the Florida Panther and Woodstork.
- Increased truck traffic will adversely affect public health, safety, and welfare. The percentage of fatal crashes involving dump trucks is much greater than the percentage of other vehicles. In studies of fatalities involving large trucks, the highest percentage of fatalities occur on rural, two-lane undivided roadways. Data indicates that 75% of fatal crashes involving large trucks occur on roadways with a posted speed limit of 50MPH or higher. Corkscrew Road is a two-lane arterial with a posted speed of 55 MPH. This corridor represents the sole means of access for residents of the area.
- Mining activity is ecologically disruptive and results in a permanent and irrevocable alteration to the natural landscape of the DR/GR. These alterations create permanent adverse impacts to hydrology, surface water flow, and natural systems function of wetland and aquatic resources of regional importance. For these reasons, mining should be restricted to those areas already impacted by mining activities rather than encouraged in new areas.
- Mining on this site could increase the likelihood of flooding some Estero communities inasmuch as most Estero communities lie downstream of the RCH property
- Mining on the RCH site will impair wetlands downstream of the mine thus causing the water flowing into our rivers and streams and eventually into Estero Bay to further contaminate that important estuary.
- Residents will be subject to adverse quality of life impacts including those related to noise, dust, light pollution, and blasting.
- “Domino effect”: Approval of this zoning request would establish a new development pattern and set a precedent for seven other rock mine applications pending on Corkscrew Road. This would predispose the area to a development pattern that would be inconsistent and incompatible with the intent of the DR/GR.
- Lee County derives 80% of its municipal water supply from the DR/GR. There is increased risk of contamination of public well fields near open water bodies like mining pits. The recent Corkscrew well field expansion directly borders the proposed mine site.