

To:
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
520 Lafayette Rd
St. Paul, MN 55155

Via Email

December 21, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

The Council for Minnesota Archaeology has been apprised of two recent quarry development efforts, specifically the Red Rock Quarry and the Lorentz Quarry projects, within Southwest Minnesota's Red Rock Ridge near the Jeffers Petroglyphs Historic Site in Cottonwood County. Archaeological sites in this region are of great importance both to the Native Peoples who created, used, and still use them today, and to the archaeological community. The preservation of these sites represents good cultural resource stewardship and continued goodwill toward Native American communities. The two quarry development projects are in the same cultural landscape where at least one burial cairn, three boulder outlines in the shape of a man, a buffalo head, and a kite-shaped astronomical observatory have been identified. The ultimate size of this cultural landscape and the Jeffers Petroglyphs Site are unknown and research in the last several years suggests it is far larger than previously thought. These sites are at least 8,000 years old and perhaps older, which could mean they span the entire human history in this part of North America. The potential of similar Native American cultural resources in these development areas is exceptionally high given similar environmental settings.

The Council for Minnesota Archaeology is a non-profit organization comprised of archaeology professionals dedicated to promoting archaeological research and interpretation in Minnesota. As an organization, the Council rarely comments on development activities within the state of Minnesota; however, given the now ongoing development efforts in Cottonwood County, and the apparent limited concern given to known, important cultural resources, we find it necessary to register our concern for these invaluable cultural properties.

The Council for Minnesota Archaeology specifically requests archaeological examination of the Lorentz Quarry Project be immediately initiated, continued, and completed; and current development efforts be paused to give the archaeological community and related stakeholders a chance to complete their cultural resource work.

Sincerely,



Jeremy L. Nienow, Ph.D., RPA
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St. Paul, MN 55102

Cc: Cottonwood County
Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office
Minnesota Office of the State Archaeologist.