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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Sierra Club Opposes Tiffany's Latest Frac-Sand Mining Favors**

**Madison:** The Sierra Club today announced opposition to SB 632, Senator Tom Tiffany's latest attack on local control to benefit the frac sand industry and a handful of owners of sand deposits over the authority of local governments to regulate and protect the public health, air, water and safety of their residents. SB 632 directly attacks the 2012 Wisconsin Supreme Court decision upholding the right of local governments to regulate and even prohibit a frac sand mine proposal.

SB 632 replaces SB 349, pulled from consideration last year over widespread protests. SB 632 retains the rotten core provisions of SB 349. It still ties the hands of local governments by prohibiting the use of village powers for setting rules on frac sand operations. It prohibits local governments from changing or even enforcing rules for operating frac sand mines even if they're found to be "non-conforming" meaning found in violation of the rules. It establishes that local governments are prohibited from doing anything to stop a frac sand operation on lands registered as having a sand deposit – a boon to owners of sand deposits.

Tiffany introduced the bill on February 26 and has scheduled a hasty public hearing with only two days notice for 12 pm, Monday, March 3 in Room 412 East, State Capitol.

"Senator Tiffany's newest bill proves again that he will sell out local governments and their residents to benefit the mining industry," said, Dave Blouin, JMC Mining Committee Chair, "SB 632 is just as rotten as the bill it replaced and we urge legislators to reject it and instead work to strengthen controls on frac sand mining. There is no evidence regulation has harmed sand mine development and in fact, there is growing evidence that the lack of regulation is causing harm to local air and water resources."

As of June 2013, an estimated 115 frac sand mines were operating. At least 20 notices of permit violations have been issued by the DNR and 6 cases of violations have been referred to the state Department of Justice for prosecution. Three cases have resulted in \$360,000 in settlements so far.

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*Founded in 1892 by John Muir, the Sierra Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. The Sierra Club's mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out those objectives. The Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter is made up of 15,000 members and supporters working to promote clean energy and protect water resources in Wisconsin.*