

From: [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)
To: [Elizabeth Jones](#)
Subject: FW: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Private/Before Publication)
Date: Monday, June 27, 2022 8:52:19 PM

From: Texas Sunset Advisory Commission <sunset@sunset.texas.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 27, 2022 4:57 PM
To: Sunset Advisory Commission <Sunset.AdvisoryCommission@sunset.texas.gov>
Subject: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Private/Before Publication)

Submitted on Mon, 06/27/2022 - 15:56

Submitted by: Visitor

Submitted values are:

Choose the agency that you would like to provide input about

[Texas Commission on Environmental Quality](#)

Public Comments

1

First Name

Kira

Last Name

Olson

Email

City

Bulverde

State

Texas

Your Comments or Concerns

on attached file

Your Proposed Solution

on attached file

Attachment

[Kira TCEQ Sunset Commission Testimony.pdf](#) (91.43 KB)

My Comments Will Be Made Public

Yes

June 27, 2022

Dear Texas Sunset Advisory Commission,

My name is Kira Olson. My testimony is as follows:

My husband and I moved into Comal County in 2005 in pursuit of raising our family in the Texas Hill Country. We found a small ranch that was undisturbed by industry and overpopulation. In August of 2017, we were dealt a blow when we were notified by a fellow resident that Blue Pine Holdings, a ghost company of Vulcan Materials bought the 1500 acre ranch whom we share our back fence line with.

After listening to the Sunset Review Hearing on Wednesday, June 22, 2022, I was appalled by your apparent disregard for the solutions brought forth by professionals, citizens, and organizations that have the science to back their claims. This is not a “not in my backyard issue”, this is a culmination of serious problems caused by the TCEQ that are out of control in Texas.

First, my family did not build up to a quarry. A quarry is attempting to come into a community where pure air and water are a scarce luxury and are in danger of being compromised.

Currently, the TCEQ sets the citizen up for a “set to fail” process. It is a blatant waste of time and money for citizens, to fight industry. In order to stand a chance, one has to put their life aside, form an organization, hire an attorney, raise a ton of money, go through the absolutely ridiculous process the TCEQ has in play (public meeting, SOAH hearing, contested case hearing...) for the TCEQ commissioners to ultimately pass the permit and finally go into the Texas court system and sue the TCEQ. In our personal case, we have made it through with a win but are now in the Third Court of Appeals. Five years of our lives have been put on hold for this case and I am sure many more to come.

- TCEQ does not adequately protect our health and natural resources,
- TCEQ does not follow their mission statement, they are more concerned with approving permits for polluting activities.
- TCEQ does not adequately respond to our questions, nor do they address our concerns at public meetings.

- Why are companies like Vulcan Materials, with over 80 formal complaints in Texas and over 35 violations cited at a single plant considered to have excellent compliance history?
- TCEQ does not enforce their own rules and hold violators accountable.
- TCEQ is too cozy with out of state quarry and APO corporations such as Vulcan Materials.
- Why is TCEQ continuing to fight Texas citizens in the courtroom?

Across Texas, it's clear that citizens have lost confidence in TCEQ's ability to protect us and our natural resources.

When considering permit applications for quarries:

- TCEQ should take into account all sources of pollution not just the rock crushing machinery: haul roads, blasting and mining operations, and fugitive dust should all be considered.
- TCEQ should consider cumulative impacts of nearby facilities instead of treating each facility as a lone source of air pollution.
- TCEQ should supervise aggregate mining activities or let the Railroad Commission do it.
- TCEQ should hold an additional public meeting before reviewing a permit application.
- Hold TCEQ accountable: commissioners should be elected, not appointed.
- Next sunset review for TCEQ should happen in six years, not twelve.

I support the recommendations made by TRAM (Texans for Responsible Aggregate Mining) and ask you to do so as well. There is value in working together. Please see our personal case here: <https://www.stop3009vulcanquarry.com/>

Thank you for your time. Please take into consideration the lives of Texans and our natural resources that we depend on.

Yours respectfully,



Kira Olson

Bulverde, TX