

New and Exciting News!

You may have heard about the proposed sand mining operation to begin on HWY228 by now. There was a wave of opposition in the beginning of this proposal due to the fact that Oldcastle, the sand mining company, was going to have to drill a deep well to our aquifer in order to acquire the water necessary to mine sand. There has been some really good news develop this week in regards to this project. Elizabeth Revell, the public affairs consultant for Oldcastle, told us this week, "We will no longer need to drill a deep well and pull water from the Floridan Aquifer. We are continuing our discussions with the City of Macclenny and hope to come to a mutually-beneficial agreement in the very near future."

The city of Macclenny currently dumps its reclaimed/recycled water from the water treatment plant into Turkey Creek. The Oldcastle company has offered to build a pipeline, at their own expense, from the city water plant to the location of the sand mining on HWY228. This will save money for the Macclenny taxpayers and provide the City of Macclenny an equitable solution for the problem it is facing with growth and what to do with its reclaimed/recycled water. Ms. Revell went on to tell us, "We will partner with the city to reclaim 100% of the water now being discharged into Turkey Creek from the city's Honeywell Road plant." There is enough reclaimed water from the City of Macclenny to supply Oldcastle with enough water to supply their office, plant, toilets and sinks. There will be no need for a well to be drilled to get water for the project and it will provide a long needed alternative to dumping the reclaimed water into Turkey Creek. Further, Oldcastle will use excess water to spray uplands and actually help to recharge the aquifer. When Oldcastle is finished mining the sand from the site, they will provide a recreational area and lakes for future generations to enjoy for years to come.

Who is Oldcastle? Oldcastle has more than 30,000 employees in the United States, and has been in business for over 30 years. They are America's largest manufacturer of building products and materials for residential, commercial, and infrastructure. They have locations in all 50 states. The site for the proposed Oldcastle Sand Mine on HWY228 is on property currently used by DuPont for titanium mining. Oldcastle is asking the Baker County Commission for permission to reuse a portion of this land to build and operate a state-of-the-art sand mining facility. Oldcastle will purchase 436.9 acres of land, but will only mine around 192 acres, which means they will mine under 3 acres per year.

Elizabeth Revell told us, "Our number one responsibility is always to the environment and to the communities in which we operate. We want to be a long-term, good corporate citizen in Baker County."

With this new development, there will be no impact to Baker County's water supplies, wetlands, springs, or surface water bodies, no "drawdowns" (water level decline), no increase in pumping costs and no decrease in water available for supply. The pipeline project and the sand mining plant will supply \$2.5 million in jobs for Baker County.

Oldcastle is happy to answer any questions and address all concerns for any citizen regarding their project and encourage you to ask questions. They are also glad to meet with community groups for Q&A. Contact Elizabeth Revell, Public Affairs Consultant at elizabeth@oldcastle4baker.com or call her directly at (904) 583-5755. Visit www.oldcastle4baker.com for more information about this project.