

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5439

As Passed Senate, March 15, 1997

Title: An act relating to small public works surface mines.

Brief Description: Providing an exclusion for what constitutes surface mining.

Sponsors: Senators Morton, Hargrove, Stevens and Benton.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Natural Resources & Parks: 2/28/97 [DP].
Passed Senate, 3/15/97, 46-1.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Oke, Chair; Rossi, Vice Chair; Hargrove, Jacobsen, Morton, Prentice, Roach, Snyder, Stevens and Swecker.

Staff: Vic Moon (786-7469)

Background: During the 1996 legislative session, legislation was passed which exempts county fees for small gravel pits and surface mines used for public works projects. Counties must still pay for reclamation plans. An exemption to the Surface Mining Act for small counties would affect pits from three to seven acres.

Summary of Bill: Surface mining excludes excavations or grading used primarily for public works projects, if the mines are owned or operated primarily by counties with 1993 populations of less than 20,000 persons, and each mine has an area of less than 7 acres of disturbed area.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 17, 1997.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Small counties have 40 to 50 small gravel pits and the reclamation plan costs are expensive. They will still reclaim the pits.

Testimony Against: An exemption reduces the act and the Department of Natural Resources' control.

Testified: Senator Morton, prime sponsor (pro); Art Sterns, Department of Natural Resources (con).