
Hillstone Aggregates

MSDP and Land Use Amendment – Phase 4 & 5

Engagement Summary

July 2026



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Hillstone Aggregates, formerly known as the Big Hill Springs Gravel Pit, has been in operation since its grand opening on Aug. 30, 2005.

Hillstone Aggregates is proposing amendments related to the continued operation of the existing aggregate resource development located at NW 36-26-04-W5M, municipally addressed as 40217 Big Hill Springs Road in Rocky View County. The current application includes a proposed Master Site Development Plan (MSDP) amendment and Land Use Redesignation for Phases 4 and 5 to support the continued operation of the aggregate resource and align the land use designation of the west lands with the proposed operational phases.

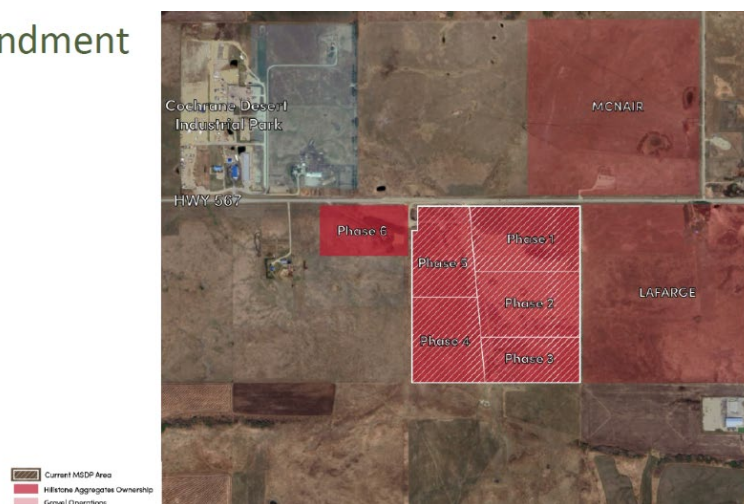
1.1 Site History

The current MSDP was approved in 2022 and Phases 1, 2 and 3 are currently in operation. Public engagement for Hillstone Aggregates has occurred across multiple phases of planning and development throughout the history of the site. Public engagement activities have included:

- A 2013 open house for the Big Hill Springs Gravel Pit Development Permit application
- A February 2018 open house for the Phase 1 Development Permit extension
- A June 2018 open house for the Phase 2 Development Permit application
- A 2025 mailout and virtual information session for the current MSDP amendment and Land Use Redesignation application

This Engagement Summary has been prepared by B&A Studios and provides a summary of the 2025 public engagement activities, feedback received and responses developed by the project team in support of the current applications.

MSDP Amendment



2.0 2025 PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

2.1 Engagement objectives

The 2025 public engagement efforts established a communication program to provide the local community, interested parties, and regulatory agencies with timely, factual information about the proposed land use applications for Hillstone Aggregates. The engagement program was designed primarily at the **Inform** level of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation. The objective was to provide interested parties with information about the proposed applications and opportunities to learn about the project, ask questions and share feedback for consideration by the project team.

2.2 Interested parties

The Engagement Plan identified a range of interested parties for notification and outreach, including adjacent residential and business landowners within one mile of the site, environmental organizations, Rocky View County and other government agencies, Alberta Transportation and Economic Corridors (ATEC), and other aggregate operators within Rocky View County.

2.3 Engagement activities

The engagement program included several communication activities to raise awareness of the project and provide access to project information and engagement opportunities.

- **Project website** – A dedicated project website was established to provide project information, maps, background materials, and answers to frequently asked questions. The website also included information about the proposed applications, aggregate operations, reclamation, and opportunities to participate in the engagement process.
- **Mailed project newsletter April 10, 2025** – A project newsletter was mailed to residents and businesses within one mile of the site to introduce the proposed applications, explain the purpose of the project, provide mapping of the proposed operational phases and surrounding area, and invite recipients to participate in the engagement process.
- **Virtual information session May 8, 2025** – A virtual public information session was held to present the proposed land use applications, explain the project in more detail, answer questions from participants, and provide an opportunity for attendees to share comments with the project team. 17 individuals registered to attend, and 12 participants attended. Questions raised during the session covered the following topics:
 - Process for triggering shutdowns
 - Information session format and attendance

- Need for additional gravel
- Phase 6 and whether it should be included in the application
- Process for reporting concerns and receiving feedback
- Status of the application compared to the Aggregate Resource Plan
- Reclamation and post-extraction land condition
- Water and noise monitoring
- **Agency coordination** – Project information was shared with Rocky View County and other applicable agencies throughout the engagement process to support regulatory review.
- **Site signage** – Signage was installed at the site to increase awareness of the applications and direct interested parties to the project website for additional information.
- **Newspaper advertising** – Advertisements were placed in the *Rocky View Weekly* and *Cochrane Eagle* to notify the broader community of the project and promote the virtual information session.

2.4 Follow-up

Questions and comments received during the engagement process have been organized into themes and are summarized in Section 3.0, together with responses provided by the project team. As the application progresses, the project website may continue to be used to share updates and provide project information.

3.0 WHAT WE HEARD

Feedback received through the 2025 engagement program covered a range of topics related to the proposed land use applications, aggregate operations, environmental management, and the application process.

One significant outcome of the engagement was Hillstone Aggregates' decision to pause the Municipal Development Plan (MSDP) and Land Use Amendment applications for the proposed Phase 6 lands. As identified in the application materials, Hillstone may continue to evaluate options for future Phase 6 operations that meet County requirements and address neighbour concerns. Should a revised proposal be developed, it would be brought forward through a separate application process.

Questions and comments received during the virtual information session generally related to the following themes:

3.1 Theme: Engagement and Communication

Participants raised concerns about the virtual format and whether the engagement approach provided a meaningful opportunity for residents to be heard. Some participants felt the format was not appropriate for residents, suggested the process felt like a “check-the-box” exercise.

Participants expressed concern that residents did not receive enough notice about the virtual session. Some indicated they only learned about the session by accident and questioned whether website-based advertising is sufficient for rural residents and nearby landowners.

Representative questions and comments

- “Residents do not feel they have really been heard.”
- “This entire approach is designed to tick a box to say you’ve consulted the community.”
- “How did you inform people about this meeting?”
- “Many of us only found out about the meeting by accident.”

Feedback and Responses	
Question	Response
Were any follow-up communications issued after the May 8 session (e.g., one of the engagement plans referenced a responses to questions document)?	<i>Follow up will be issued in Summer 2026, this is due to a change in consultant.</i>
What was the date the mailout was distributed?	<i>The mailout was sent to residents on April 10, 2025. The virtual information session was held on May 8, 2025.</i>
What was the notification radius used at the time.	<i>The letter was distributed to those within 1.6 km of the site.</i>
Were landowners along haul routes included in the mailout (separate from the 1.6km radius)?	<i>Residents were not notified along haul routes. The intent of this application is allow for gravel extraction from Phase 4 and 5 after the previous phases have been exhausted. The active portion of the gravel pit has a maximum size permissible by the County. Thus, residents along the haul routes will not experience an increase in gravel truck traffic as the application will not result in higher production rates.</i>

3.2 Theme: Monitoring, Reporting and Transparency

Questions focused on access to annual operating reports, air quality monitoring, complaint response procedures and operational shutdown protocols.

Participants expressed concern about dust plumes, diesel exhaust and the health and safety implications of air quality near the pit. Participants asked what is monitored, whether diesel particulate matter is included and what happens when exceedances occur.

Participants asked specific technical and operational questions about shutdowns due to wind.

Representative questions and comments

- “When will Hillstone’s annual operating reports be posted on its website? Currently, the latest report available is its 2021 annual report.”
- “When residents express concern regarding massive dust plumes emitting from the pit, there is no feedback to them regarding what the monitors showed, what actions were taken or how long exceedances were active before action was taken.”
- “Is the monitor measuring diesel exhaust particulate emissions too? Sometimes it is unbearable.”
- “How can residents determine the risk to their health and safety without seeing such reports?”
- “How many times has Hillstone shut down due to high winds in the last two years?”
- “What is the wind speed that triggers shutdown?”

Feedback and Responses

Question	Response
Will we post Hillstone’s annual operating reports to the website? The most recent publicly available report appears to be from 2021.	<i>As per the Aggregate Development Performance Standards, annual reports will be submitted to the County. These reports will not be posted on the website given the technical nature of the reports.</i>
Why has the 2023 air quality and monitoring report not been posted?	<i>Previous annual reports have been submitted to the County. These reports will not be posted on the website given their technical nature.</i>
What air quality parameters are currently monitored? Does this include diesel exhaust particulate matter?	<i>As per the Aggregate Development Performance Standards, PM2.5, PM10 and TSP24 will be monitored. Diesel particulate matter falls under all three of these categories and thus will be monitored.</i>
When dust or air quality concerns are raised, what process is followed to review monitoring data	<i>Hillstone reviews monitoring data collected daily by the on-site monitoring equipment.</i>
When dust or air quality concerns are raised, what process is followed to determine if exceedances occurred	<i>Monitoring data is reviewed to determine whether an exceedance occurred. Where an exceedance is identified, Hillstone assesses whether the source originated on site or off site.</i>

When dust or air quality concerns are raised, what process is followed to take action	<i>Where the source is on-site, mitigative actions will be taken to reduce emissions.</i>
Communicate results back to residents	<i>The results of the actions will be communicated to the complainant.</i>
Are exceedances tracked? If so, how long are they typically active before mitigation actions are implemented?	<i>Yes, exceedances are tracked. Exceedances are responded to within an hour of identification.</i>
How many times has Hillstone shut down due to high winds in the past two years?	<i>Operations are shut down due to the weather. Operations are shut down when high winds are forecasted, there is visible dust and monitors show excess wind speeds</i>
What wind speed triggers a shutdown?	<i>Operations are shut down when high winds are forecasted, there is visible dust and monitors show excess wind speeds</i>

3.3 Theme: Water and Groundwater

Participants asked whether water monitoring includes only water levels or also groundwater quality testing. Participants also asked about post-closure monitoring and the use of calcium chloride for dust suppression.

Representative questions and comments:

- “Are you required or committed to do post-closure monitoring of groundwater? If so, for how long?”
- “If you are using calcium chloride for dust suppression, where is the chloride going?”
- “The water monitoring is only for water levels? There is not chemical, organic/inorganics, etc. testing done for contaminants?”
- “So Hillstone does not do any groundwater quality analysis?”
- “How do you know if there are impacts to groundwater quality if you do not do any testing?”

Feedback and Responses

Question	Response
What groundwater monitoring is currently conducted?	<i>There are seven monitoring wells located on site that are measured monthly.</i>
Is it limited to water levels, or does it include chemical testing (organic and inorganic contaminants)?	<i>To date, groundwater sampling has been limited to water levels.</i>

Does Hillstone conduct groundwater quality analysis? If so, what parameters are tested?	<i>Under the Aggregate Development Performance Standards introduced in December 2025, groundwater samples will be analyzed for general chemistry parameters, metals and any additional analytes required by the County.</i>
Is post-closure groundwater monitoring required? If so, for how long?	<i>Monitoring is not required after reclamation.</i>
Is calcium chloride used for dust suppression?	<i>Yes. Calcium chloride is used for dust suppression when required. Water is typically sufficient for dust control, so calcium chloride is used sparingly.</i>
How is calcium chloride managed on site?	<i>Calcium chloride is not stored on site. It is applied by a contractor when required and is used sparingly, as water is typically sufficient for dust control.</i>
What is its expected movement or fate in the environment?	<i>Calcium chloride is commonly used for dust suppression on unpaved roads. When applied, it binds with moisture to help reduce dust generation. It is used sparingly on the Hillstone site and only when required.</i>

3.4 Theme: Berms, visual screening and site maintenance

Participants raised concerns about berm construction, west-side berm plans, maintenance and weed control. Participants also asked what happens to berms after reclamation.

Representative questions and comments

- “What plans are in place for berms to the west?”
- “The Phase 6 is getting very close to my residence, and I have a lot of concerns.”
- “When the reclamation is complete will the existing berms be knocked down and put back to a natural state?”
- “How do all your assurances mesh with the reality that Hillstone’s berms are always covered with weeds?”

Feedback and Responses

Question	Response
What plans are in place for berms along the west side of the site?	<i>There are plans to establish a berm along the western boundary of the site.</i>
How are berms maintained over time, particularly regarding weed control?	<i>Weeds will be mowed and sprayed as per the Weed Management Plan.</i>

At the end of operations, will berms be removed or regraded as part of reclamation?

The berms will remain after reclamation.

3.5 Theme: Phase 6 and Application Scope

Participants raised significant concerns about Phase 6. Concerns included proximity to residences, impact on land use and enjoyment, whether Phase 6 should be included with Phases 4 and 5 and whether the amount of aggregate available justified the impact.

Representative questions and comments

- “Is 20 acres even worth redesignating Phase 6? With the setbacks required you aren’t getting much gravel, but you will be affecting my land use and enjoyment greatly.”
- “Why does the Phase 6 application have to be included in this Phase 4 and 5 approvals?”
- “It is a completely different title and parcel of land.”
- “I would prefer if this was divided into two applications.”
- “The Phase 6 is getting very close to my residence, and I have a lot of concerns.”

Based on feedback received during the virtual information session, Hillstone Aggregates decided to pause the MSDP and Land Use Amendment for the proposed Phase 6 lands.

Feedback and Responses

Question	Response
Why was Phase 6 initially included as part of the Phase 4 and 5 applications?	<i>It was intended that gravel be extracted from Phase 6 and thus approvals were required.</i>
Can you confirm the rationale for pausing Phase 6 following the virtual session?	<i>Based on feedback received during the engagement process, Hillstone determined that Phase 6 should not proceed as part of the current applications and postponed that portion of the project.</i>
Are there any future plans to bring Phase 6 forward as a separate application?	<i>Hillstone may consider a separate application for Phase 6 in the future.</i>

3.6 Theme: Planning process, history and timing

Participants asked why the application is proceeding before the County’s Aggregate Resource Plan is complete. Participants also asked for the project timeline and next steps to be reviewed, as well as questions about past approvals.

Representative questions and comments

- “Why is Hillstone not waiting until the ARP is in place to redesignate and update the MSDP?”
- “Can you review the project timeline again and what the next steps and dates are one more time?”
- “When was Hillstone’s DP for Phase 3 approved?”

Feedback and Responses

Question	Response
Can you provide a clear overview of the project timeline and next steps, including anticipated review and decision milestones?	<i>The application was submitted on Aug. 18, 2025. Application comments were received from Rocky View County on Jan. 16, 2026, and the latest resubmission was made on June 30, 2026. Future review of the application will proceed in accordance with Rocky View County's approval process.</i>
Why is the application proceeding ahead of the Aggregate Resource Plan (ARP)?	<i>Since the 2025 public engagement, the Aggregate Resource Plan is now completed. After submission, Rocky View County requested that the application be updated in accordance with the Aggregate Development Performance Standards. The application resubmission has been completed in accordance with these new standards.</i>
When was the Development Permit for Phase 3 approved?	<i>The Development Permit was approved July 7, 2025</i>

3.7 Theme: Reclamation and End State

Participants asked what the land will look like after reclamation, whether the site will remain as a “big hole,” what the slope grades will be and what other future land uses may be possible.

Participants expressed concern about the cumulative impacts of continued gravel pit expansion in the area. Concerns included dust, noise, traffic, water and the effect on residential property value and marketability.

Representative questions and comments

- “So it’s a big hole when reclaimed?”
- “What’s the grade of the slope?”
- “When reclamation is complete will the existing berms be knocked down and put back to a natural state?”
- “The continued growth and expansion of gravel pits is making the residential properties less desirable.”
- “They will not be able to sell to anyone but another pit and so on and so forth.”
- “Now there are issues of cumulative effects of dust, noises, traffic, water, etc.”

Feedback and Responses

Question	Response
What is the anticipated final landform following reclamation?	<i>From edges, the site will slope down and then flatten out.</i>
What slope grades are proposed for reclaimed areas?	<i>Minimum slope is 10:1 and the maximum slope is 4:1.</i>
What are the intended end uses for the site after extraction is complete?	<i>The intended end use is 50% grassland and 50% pasture.</i>

4.0 FUTURE ENGAGEMENT AND NEXT STEPS

The 2025 engagement program provided opportunities for neighbouring residents and landowners, interested parties, and agencies to learn about the proposed applications, ask questions, and provide feedback. Input received through the engagement informed the project, including the decision to pause the proposed Phase 6 lands from the current applications.

Hillstone Aggregates will follow the Aggregate Development Performance Standards process identified in the Aggregate Resource Plan and will continue to advance the project in accordance with Rocky View County's approval process.

As the application progresses, project updates may be shared through the project website and other communication methods, as appropriate. The project website will remain the primary source for publicly available information related to the applications.

APPENDIX A– VIRTUAL INFORMATION SESSION PRESENTATION MAY 8, 2025



40217 & 41055 Big Hill Springs Rd
Land Use Amendment & MSDP

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quantumplace.ca

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Agenda & Meeting Norms

AGENDA

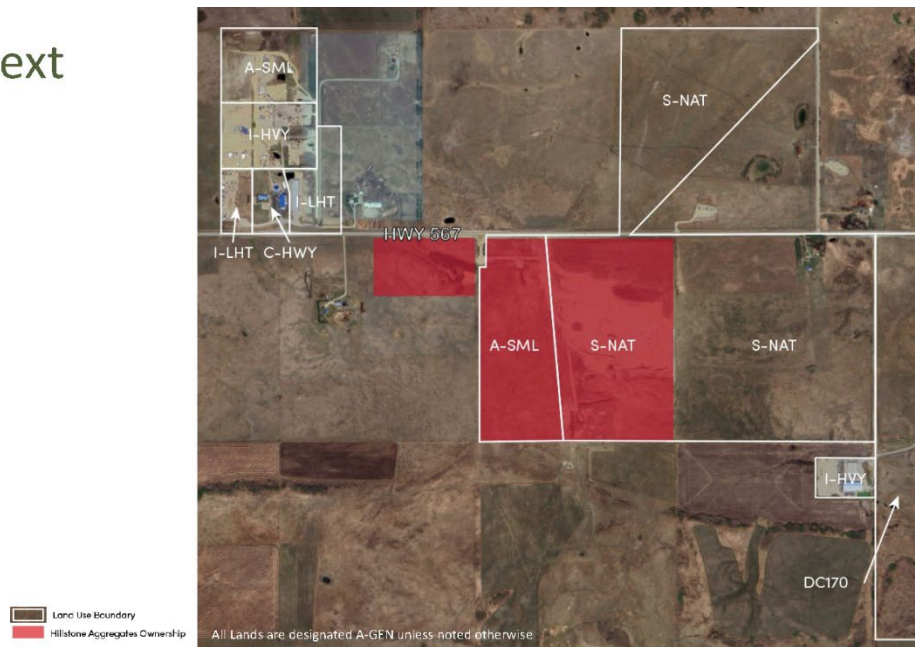
- Presentation 15 minutes
- Q&A for 45 minutes
 - We will respond to questions after the presentation
- Submit questions using the “Q&A” button or by raising your hand and we will enable you to unmute your microphone
- Please type your comments using the chat feature
- If you are experiencing technical issues, please message **Alison** in the chat OR send an email to **alison.timmins@quantumplace.ca**

Meeting Norms

- Every perspective is important; everyone that would like to participate will be given the opportunity to do so.
- Questions will be answered in the order we receive them .
- If we do not have the information to answer the question, or if there are unanswered questions at the end of the session, we will respond within the What We Heard report.



Existing Context & Land Use



HILLSTONE
AGGREGATES

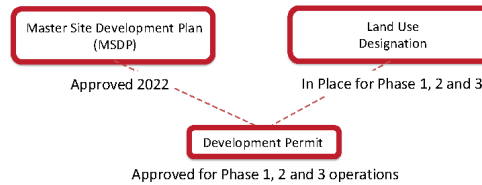
Gravel Operation Approvals



PROVINCIAL

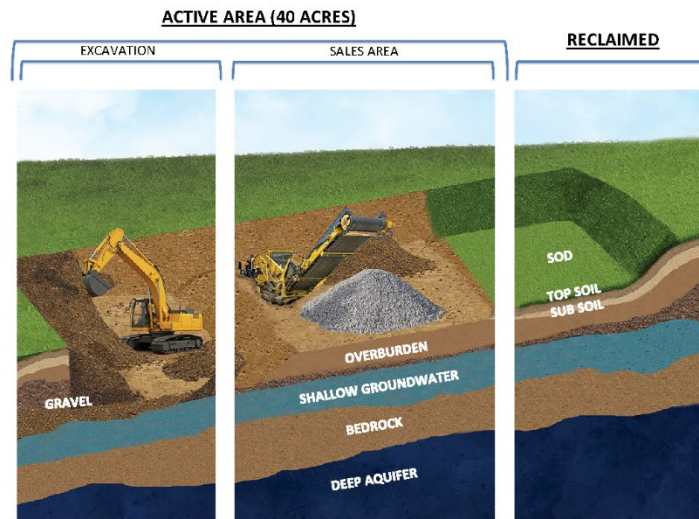


MUNICIPAL



HILLSTONE
AGGREGATES

How Does Hillstone's Gravel Operation Work?



*Illustration not to scale

HILLSTONE
AGGREGATES

How Do We Address Common Concerns?



DUST



NOISE



TRAFFIC



GROUNDWATER

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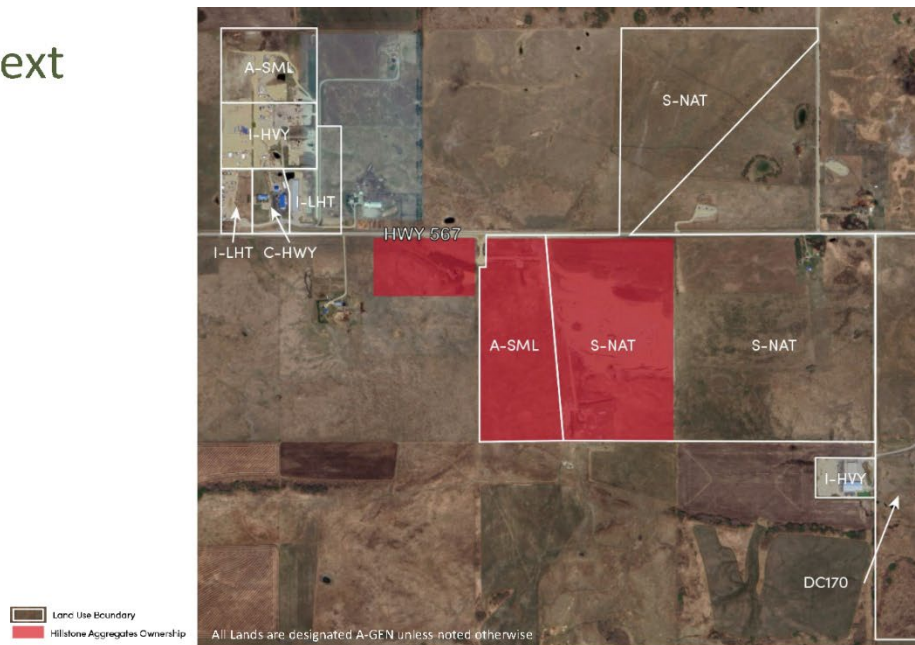
What Happens When You Contact Hillstone With A Concern?



MSDP Amendment



Existing Context & Land Use



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Land Use Redesignation



AGRICULTURAL USES

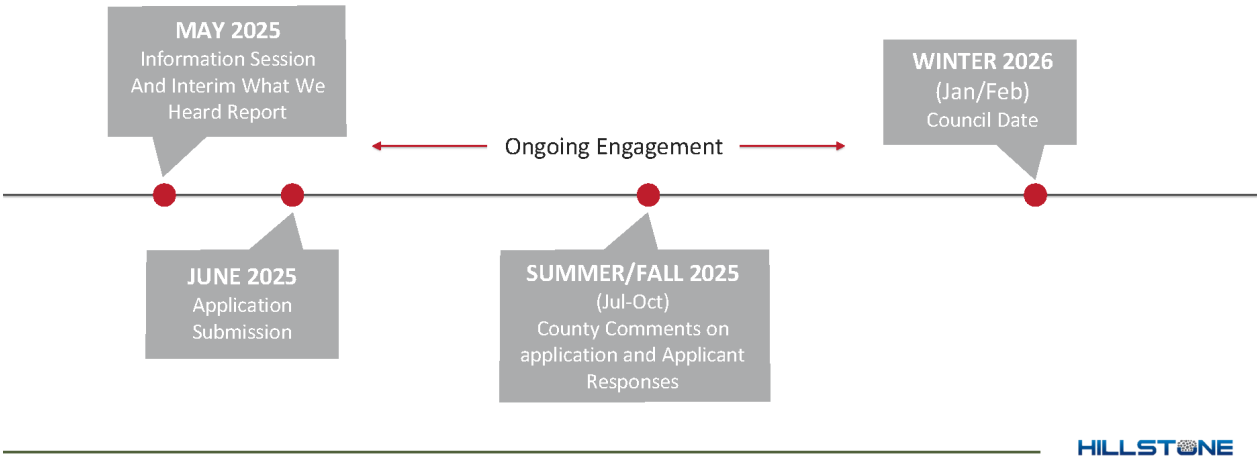


GRAVEL OPERATION USES

- Hillstone would like to enable extraction in phases 4, 5 and 6.
- Rocky View Administration has requested that the entire site be redesignated to accommodate both gravel operations and post reclamation uses.
- On the recommendation of Administration Hillstone has proposed a Direct Control District based on Special-Natural Resources and Agricultural General Districts

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Estimated Timeline and Next Steps



Questions?

Crystal Hofer– Mplan, CMCIP
Community Planner

Phone: 1.587.315.5296
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Thank You.

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APPENDIX B – MAILED PROJECT NEWSLETTER APRIL 10, 2025



Hello Neighbour,

We hope this letter finds you well. We're reaching out to update you about some forthcoming minor land use changes related to Hillstone Aggregates' operations. As a company committed to transparency and open dialogue, we consider your input essential in the planning and implementation of these changes.

Overview of Land Use Changes

The proposed changes aim to:

- Incorporate new lands into our existing aggregate operation. These lands would be considered an additional operational phase and would not affect our maximum active site area.
- Redesignate existing lands within our operation to acknowledge operational uses and appropriate end state uses that can take place after the land is reclaimed.

These changes are in line with our sustainability goals and compliance with environmental regulations.

Ways to Engage

Visit Our Project Webpage at www.qpengage.ca

We have created a dedicated webpage to provide comprehensive information about the project. You can visit the project webpage to:

- Read an overview of the project
- Explore the objectives and expected outcomes
- Learn more about aggregate operations and reclamation
- Provide Feedback

Attend Our Virtual Information Session

We invite you to an information session on **May 8th, 2025 @ 6:30pm on ZOOM**. Please use the following link to register:

https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_nXSL0t0QzuKN2n8MwfugQ

During the information session, you can:

- Meet our project team
- Learn more about our operations
- Gain insight into our application
- View visual aids such as maps and models



Your Feedback Matters

After the virtual information session, we will review all feedback and may update our plans accordingly. You can follow our application progress through our website and look forward to a follow-up update on the website summarizing the community's input and any changes to the project.

Contact Us

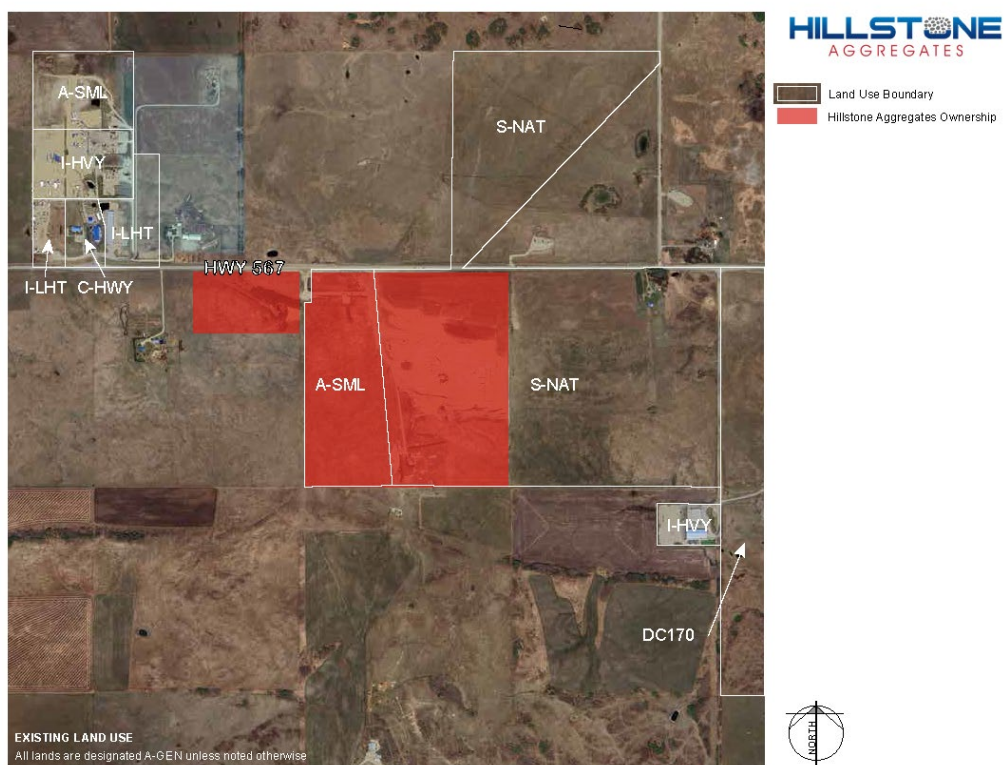
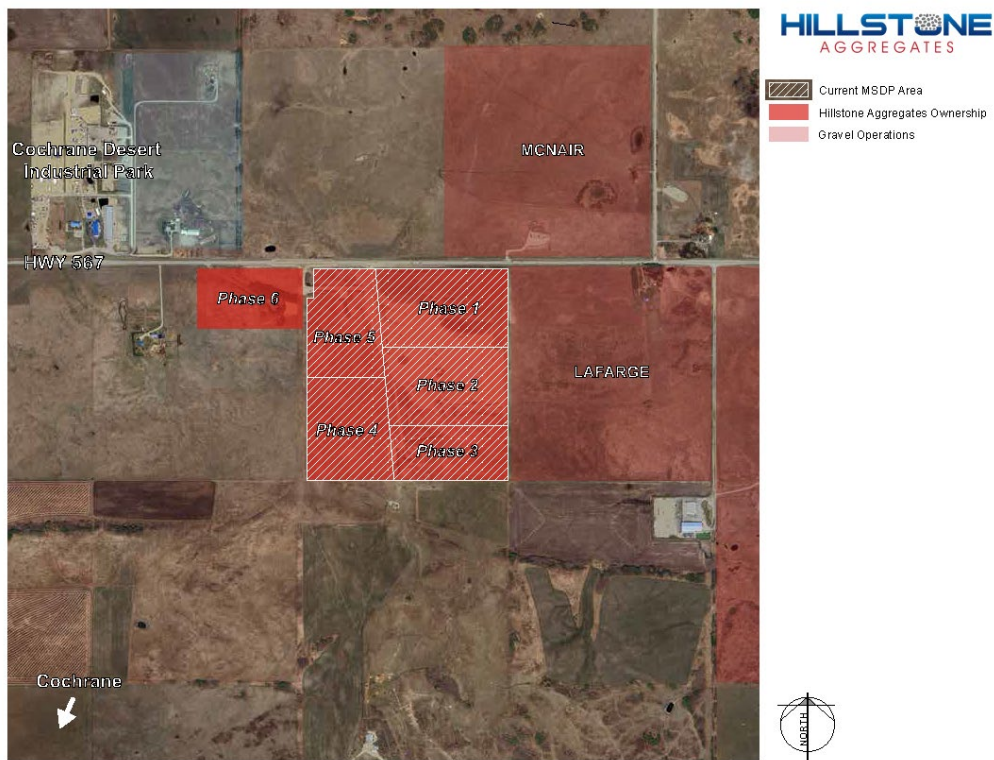
If you have immediate questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact our Community Planner, Crystal Hofer, at crystal.hofer@quantumplace.ca.

We value your input and look forward to your active participation in shaping the future of our community.

Best Regards,

The Hillstone Team

Please keep this mailout for your records and feel free to share it with family, friends, or neighbors who may also be interested. Thank you for your time and consideration.



APPENDIX C – OVERVIEW PREVIOUS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT – 2013 TO 2018

Public engagement has been an ongoing component of the planning and development of the Hillstone Aggregates operation. Prior to the 2025 engagement program, Hillstone undertook three engagement activities to support various Development Permit applications and provide opportunities for nearby residents and landowners to learn about the project, ask questions and share feedback.

The following provides a high-level overview of those activities undertaken between 2013 and 2018.

C.1 Previous Public Engagement Activities

Year	Engagement Activity	Purpose	Participation
2013	Development Permit Open House	To introduce the Phase 1 Development Permit application for the Big Hill Springs Gravel Pit and provide an opportunity for questions and comments.	Approximately 10 participants
February 2018	Phase 1 Development Permit Extension Open House	To present the proposed extension of the Phase 1 Development Permit and provide information on ongoing operations and reclamation activities.	13 participants
June 2018	Phase 2 Development Permit Open House	To present the proposed Phase 2 Development Permit application and provide an opportunity for questions and feedback.	Three participants

C.2 Summary of Engagement Activities

2013 Development Permit Open House

A public open house was held on Feb. 14, 2013 at the Weedon Pioneer Community Association Hall to present the proposed Phase 1 Development Permit application.

Notification included an advertisement in the Rocky View Weekly inviting interested parties to attend, ask questions and provide comments. Display boards, an open letter and a sign-in sheet were provided at the event.

Approximately 10 people attended. No objections or formal concerns were received.

February 2018 Phase 1 Development Permit Extension Open House

A public open house was held on Feb. 22, 2018 to present the proposed extension of the Phase 1 Development Permit.

Notification included advertisements in the Rocky View Weekly together with mailed notification letters distributed by Rocky View County to approximately 169 addresses within 1.5 kilometres of the site.



Display boards outlined ongoing operations, reclamation activities, berm construction, equipment upgrades, traffic improvements and groundwater monitoring.

A total of 13 people attended. No complaints or requests for additional information were received. Several attendees expressed support for Hillstone Aggregates' operation while indicating opposition to additional aggregate operations in the surrounding area.

June 2018 Phase 2 Development Permit Open House

A public open house was held on June 21, 2018 regarding the proposed Phase 2 Development Permit application.

Notification included advertisements in the Rocky View Weekly together with mailed notices to approximately 150 properties within 2.4 kilometres of the site.

Eight display boards presented information regarding current operations, the proposed Phase 2 expansion, reclamation activities, access changes and operational performance.

Three members of the public attended. No written comments, complaints or follow-up inquiries were received following the event.

While participation varied across the three engagement activities, several consistent themes emerged over time.

C.3 Key Themes

The previous public engagement activities identified several consistent themes:

- **Limited recorded concern** – Few formal objections, complaints or written submissions were recorded during the engagement activities.
- **Operational information** – Questions generally focused on the purpose of each application, future extraction sequencing, operational activities and reclamation.
- **Operational performance** – Information presented during engagement emphasized environmental management, reclamation, dust and noise mitigation, groundwater monitoring and ongoing site improvements.
- **Support for the existing operation** – Some participants expressed support for the existing Hillstone Aggregates operation while indicating concern regarding the potential development of additional aggregate operations elsewhere in the area.
- **Direct local notification** – Engagement activities primarily relied on mailed notification, newspaper advertisements and in-person open houses to inform nearby residents and landowners.

Together, these engagement activities demonstrate Hillstone Aggregates' ongoing communication with nearby residents and landowners throughout the planning process. Supporting materials, including historical open house reports, advertisements and engagement materials, are maintained as part of the project record.