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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**FRIENDS OF HAWN ASSOCIATION SECURES PROTECTIONS
FOR HAWN STATE PARK FROM NEXGEN SILICA, LLC**

Sainte Genevieve, MO. – The Friends of Hawn Association announces that it has reached a settlement with Nexgen Silica, LLC in connection with the Friends of Hawn Association’s challenge to the Missouri Mining Commission permit issued for the proposed sand mining facility along Highway 32.

When the Friends of Hawn became aware of Nexgen’s proposed Sainte Genevieve sand mine, the organization was deeply concerned about the impact to Hawn State Park and the other natural areas from the potential impacts of this facility. The Friends were also concerned about the State of Missouri’s ability to reclaim the affected lands if Nexgen did not fulfill its state obligations to return the affected land to its natural character when the mine is closed.

Accordingly, the Friends of Hawn challenged the Missouri Department of Natural Resources’ issuance of a Missouri Mining Commission permit for the site. While the Friends of Hawn respect MDNR’s mission and its personnel, we disagreed with the decision to issue the permit in light of the record available to us and our concerns about the site.

While our challenge to the mining permit was pending, the Friends and Nexgen engaged in discussions regarding our concerns related to the eventual land reclamation issue as well as the mines impact on local light and noise pollution. During our discussion, Nexgen committed to binding itself and its successors to commitments above and beyond what MDNR could have required of them. As such we were able to reach an accord with Nexgen with regard to the land reclamation permit.

The settlement requires Nexgen to:

- Ensure additional resources are available to reclaim the affected land by increasing the surety bond amount from the statutorily required amount of \$61,500.00 to \$200,000.00 prior to removing any overburden from the site. This increase cannot be used to cover expansions of the permitted area in the future. This amount will be secured and bound to the State of Missouri so it will be available to MDNR to reclaim the site should Nexgen be unable or otherwise fail to fulfill this obligation.
- Address light pollution through the use of outdoor lighting fixtures at the site that are designed and positioned to prevent glare and light pollution. This includes parameters preventing the use of harsh ultra-white/blue light often seen at commercial sites in these exterior fixtures. Also, Nexgen has agreed the light produced cannot spill over into neighboring properties or public rights of way or result in glare visible from off site.

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- Limit noise pollution by restricting its blasting activities to Monday through Thursday and only during a 6-hour window (9:00am and 3:00pm). Nexgen will be allowed to engage in blasting activities on Fridays during the same hours during its first 90 days of operation only. The only exception to this restricted schedule is in the event of an emergency which was included out of concern for the safety of Nexgen's employees.
- Further abate noise pollution through the construction and maintenance of an earthen berm of at least 30ft in height between the facility and Highway 32. Native Missouri tree species will be planted along the top of the berm and between the berm and Highway 32 with sufficient density to further reduce noise from the facility.

The Friends of Hawn respect and appreciate Nexgen's willingness to discuss and respond to these concerns. We believe the obligations imposed on Nexgen through this settlement will benefit Hawn State Park, surrounding natural areas and the local community should the proposed mine be developed.

We are pleased to have been able to secure these commitments and conclude our challenge to the issuance of Nexgen's mining permit. We recognize this settlement does not resolve all of our concerns regarding the proposed facility, for example, we continue to have concerns regarding the yet to be issued permit from the Water Protection Program and the effect on area water resources. Accordingly, the Friends of Hawn will continue to monitor the process and raise concerns or legal challenges as it deems appropriate.

Contact: Friends of Hawn Association, info@friendsofhawn.org (314) 884-1494

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About the Friends of Hawn Association - The Friends of Hawn Association is a not-for-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to preserving the wildness character and integrity of Hawn State Park which includes unique natural areas, wilderness, waterfalls, unique geology, abundant wildlife and tranquil beauty. Among other things, the Friends of Hawn work to introduce visitors to Hawn State Park as well as providing education to the public about preservation, interpretation, and responsible usage of state parks and all of their resources.

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