

Let them blast elsewhere

In response to article "Austin judge recommends approval of rock-crushing plant permit" (Jan. 19):

Andy Griffith would cry out, "The fox is in the henhouse, and the city of Mayberry is sleeping!" If only he were here to tell us that in New Braunfels.

An Austin judge, who does not live in our neighborhood or breathe our air, is recommending approval of a state air-quality permit to allow five million tons of limestone to be quarried per year outside our city.

The judge did not choose to live in this historical town where families abound, but will allow another quarry to expel dust particles into our air.

Our beautiful New Braunfels, home of Landa Park, where we are concerned about protecting endangered species, will let dust and particulate matter fill the air in our county, including the habitat of the endangered golden-cheeked warbler.

The city will naturally get more taxes from this quarry and feel very fat for a while.

But how will that help if we have to spend tax money to clean the air we have allowed to be polluted?

Families live within a mile of this quarry in housing, ranging from crowded lower-end apartment complexes to ranches and shaded neighborhoods.

Many of these people have been fighting to



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keep this pollution from our area.

Others have shrugged their shoulders and said, "What can we do?"

Others sleep.

I have been involved in formally protesting this air-quality permit, and I ask: What can we do now? Who will help? Are city and county officials sleeping?

What about the citizens? Are we to give control of our air quality to a huge conglomerate from Switzerland because a judge in Austin says continued blasting, dust spewing into the

air and a fleet of trucks carrying the rocks and dust on our roads "won't be a nuisance?" To her, it won't.

There is lots of limestone in Texas away from cities — from our city.

Let them blast there.

As we sleep, plans are under way to affect our quality of life immensely.

New York City, here we come. We will be able to have eerie red fireballs of a sunset through all the dust and pollution in our air. And by then, there will be nothing we can do about the layer of dust on our houses or our cars, on the birds, plants, cattle and deer — and in our homes and in our lungs. It will be part of life in the city of New Braunfels.

Please someone, "What can we do now? Is anybody awake?"

— Rita Foust lived in New Braunfels from '85 to '90 and from 2002 to present. She is a retired educator.