

Mining Permitting in Environmentally Sensitive Areas

“Dawson & Associates provided more than the immense technical and environmental expertise our firms needed to win approval for all our Lake Belt mining projects. Dawson also helped Federal officials recognize the projects’ value and our firms’ willingness to help agencies meet their permitting requirements. This was crucial in helping the companies in the Miami-Dade Limestone Products Association win project permits.”

– Jim Hurley
President, Miami-Dade Limestone Products Association

CLIENT

The Miami-Dade Limestone Product Association

BACKGROUND

The member companies in the Miami-Dade Limestone Product Association (MDLPA) needed federal permits for limestone rock mining in Florida’s Lake Belt area between Miami-Dade County and the Florida Everglades. This area’s immense size (89 square miles) and environmental sensitivity created major permitting challenges. The association tried for more than a year without success to secure permits before contacting Dawson & Associates.

RESPONSE

The scope of the Lake Belt permitting challenge is reflected in the number of Federal offices involved in the review process, all of whom required effective communication. The offices included all levels of the Army Corps of Engineers (headquarters, division and district), the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, the Environmental Protection Agency (headquarters and local), and the U.S. Interior Department.

In response, Dawson assembled a team led by the former chief of the Army Corps of Engineers’ regulatory and technical office and the former head of the Interior Department’s national environmental compliance office.

Fundamental to a successful permit strategy involving so many Federal offices is an effective two-way communication system to coordinate the process. The Dawson team created this system and with the association’s member companies, coordinated action with federal offices. This resulted in streamlined and effective permitting procedures.

Dawson & Associates succeeded in helping all members of the association acquire their Clean Water Act Section 404 wetland permits and meet all other Federal requirements, including those of the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act. Dawson accomplished this despite numerous obstacles, including third party litigation.

Dawson & Associates also worked extensively with Members of Congress and Committee staff. This resulted in bipartisan support for the effort and effective Congressional oversight of the Federal regulating agencies.