

Gerry Klein

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April 12, 2016

Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
1313 Sherman Street, Room 215
Denver, CO 80203

Rec: 4/12/16

Ms. Amy Eschberger:

I live in Red Rock Valley Estates and my home is approximately 1 mile from Hitch Rack Ranch Road. Transit Mix Concrete Company is seeking a permit (#M-2016-010) to operate a quarry in this area. After reading over their 809 page permit request and doing my own research, **I am very much OPPOSED to the Hitch Rack Quarry Project.**

The proposed Reclamation and Mining development at Hitch Rack Ranch would bring a large-scale aggregate mining development unnecessarily close, and, abutting in at least two areas, to residential [A-5] neighborhoods. This proposal will result in **long-term consequences** to the environment, public health, safety, and well being of the affected and adjoining neighborhoods. There will be substantially increased truck traffic, dust, and noise pollution. This area is known for its strapped water resources, and is located in an area of the highest fire danger. Why would you want to put a quarry in an area of unparalleled natural beauty, abundant wildlife, wildlife habitats, and wildlife migratory trails, when another quarry is not even needed in this area? As a resident of Red Rock Valley Estates Neighborhood, I cannot support this development and; therefore, I am opposed to the development for the following reasons:

- Quarrying requires drilling and blasting with explosives, which create vibrations, noise, and dust. Once this process is completed, rock-crushing machines crush the rock, conveyor belt machines move the rock around the processing plant; and trucks are loaded and unloaded. **The process and heavy machinery required to mine is intrusive and creates significant noise and air pollution; and has a direct impact on the surrounding areas and community.** I do not want to listen to daily pounding, crushing and blasting noises that will disrupt the quality of life in the neighborhood where I live. Why do we need a company from Illinois, with the main motive of financial gain, to come in and affect the health, lives, and environment of people who live in Colorado when **there are already 3 operational quarries in this area that can do the same job and are not operating at their capacity?** Colorado Springs does not need another quarry to fulfill the needs of the city.
- Air quality is compromised and diminished by the fugitive dust associated with aggregate mining. **Dust generated by mining granite contains silica, a common naturally occurring crystal found in most rock beds. Prolonged exposure to silica may result in silicosis.** According the Centers for Disease Control, "[s]ilicosis is a disabling, nonreversible and sometimes fatal lung disease caused by over exposure to respirable crystalline silica...Over exposure to dust that contains microscopic particles of crystalline silica can cause scar tissue to form in the lungs, which reduces lung's ability to extract oxygen from the air we breathe." In addition to silicosis, inhalation of crystalline silica particles has been associated with other diseases, such as bronchitis and tuberculosis. **The larger particles PM10 (micrometers) can travel as much as 30 miles. The smaller particles PM2.5**

(micrometers) can travel many hundreds of miles and is responsible for much of Denver's Brown Cloud (<http://www.fcgov.com/airquality/particulate-matter.php>.) The strong winds in this area will help carry the particles over greater distances

- This is a health issue for the abutting and nearby residential homeowners and their livestock. My sister uses an oxygen concentrator to breathe and she stays with me 4-5 months every year. If this is approved, will the concentrated oxygen she breathes contain silica and affect her breathing even more? I didn't see any data included in their permit application concerning silica exposure for people who live near quarries, or baseline air quality studies for this area. Although there are reports on water, wildlife, soils and vegetation, I didn't see any data at all concerning human studies, especially the effects on those who have asthma or COPD. **While they may use water to mitigate the dust while mining, the water will dry, the silica dust will remain, and the high winds will blow it great distances. This may affect the health of humans, pets, and livestock; cover the interior of our homes; deplete nutrients in the soil; and create a haze over the natural beauty of our area, as well as extend the effects of their mining throughout El Paso County.**
- The proposed quarry will increase truck traffic by approximately 624 trucks per day, in addition to the existing truck traffic from the three operating quarries. **These trucks will have to travel over several older bridges that may not be capable of handling the additional traffic and may affect their limited lifespans.** The increased number of trucks will also create traffic hazards detrimental to the safety of El Paso County residents. When there is an accident on Hwy. 115, the road is often closed in one or both directions for an extended period of time, and individual lives come to a complete standstill. Medical emergencies may be affected if the road is impassable. The increase of approximately 18,720 trucks on the road, per month, will increase accident potential. Safety issues will also affect the bicyclist and motor bike clubs and individual "bikers" who use the 115 Southwestern Corridor as a major thoroughfare due to the area's geographic and aesthetic appeal.
- The Bauer Ranch and Eagle's Nest neighborhoods have one entrance and one exit rendering them land locked in the event of fire, traffic accident, blasting accident, landslides due to blasting, etc.
- At the present time, there are 3 existing quarries within an 8-mile radius; these quarries are currently operating at half their capacity. **Transit Mix would like us to believe that Colorado Springs and El Paso County could not function without the addition of the Hitch Rack Quarry. However, IF there were so much demand for aggregates in El Paso County, the existing quarries would already be operating at full capacity. A better plan, and a plan that would have less impact to the community and surrounding areas, would be to expand the existing quarries.... if more aggregate than is being produced is ever needed.** Refusing to add an unnecessary additional quarry would also be consistent with our Master Plan: Southwestern/Highway 115 Comprehensive Plan.
- Wildlife, wildlife habitats, wildlife migratory paths and biodiversity will be lost. The proposed quarry site could also be in violation of the Federal and State Endangered Species Act. **While reclamation is the goal, it may not be possible to "put Humpty Dumpty back together again" after 50 years of abuse and depletion....and then what????**
- As a native of New Orleans, I can't help but question TMC's level of commitment to this project when their safety plans include hurricanes! I don't feel like they customized their research to apply only to this project, but dealt in generalizations. I wonder if this carried over to other aspects of the details they provided, and if they were not as conscientious about this as they should be.

- **Moving dirt and extracting rock from the ground alters the flow of water runoff. The abutting and adjoining neighborhoods depend strictly on well water supplies for all their water needs. There is potential for well contamination and/or damage, or complete loss of all well water from nearby blasting, contamination from blowing dust, and water runoff. Transit Mix can't guarantee it won't happen, and nothing has been put into place to fully compensate us if it does happen. Blasting can change the water flow. Additionally, the heavy equipment necessary for quarrying uses gasoline, diesel, oil and transmission fluids. These fluids can potentially leak. Small amounts to larger spills can contaminate 100's to 1000's of gallons of ground water.**
- **While TMC lists 8 adjacent properties to the site: many more neighborhoods and families will be affected. Red Rock Valley Estates alone is home to about 82 families.**

Quarrying requires heavy equipment, blasting, drilling, earthmoving, all of which create noise and dust, and, would certainly diminish the quality of life and well being of the adjacent land owners and surrounding area. Southwestern/Highway 115 Corridor's unparalleled natural beauty will be compromised and the landscape densely populated with quarries and their side effects. The 115 Southwestern Highway area is currently taxed by the activities and traffic associated with Fort Carson, Cheyenne Mountain State Park, RV Parks, and privately owned parks opened to the public, within the surrounding area. Protection of the land, environment, and public health, safety, and wellbeing is consistent with my constitutional rights. In alliance with the "Highway 115 Citizen's Advisory Committee", the citizens, and the fellow neighborhoods along the corridor, I am opposed to the quarry development.

And finally, I ask, how would you react to a quarry that was being proposed in YOUR neighborhood? Would you want your children or grandchildren to be exposed to the effects of breathing silica on a day-to-day basis??? Would you want to listen to pounding and /or explosions on a daily basis and have dust covering everything you touch? Would you want your only water source to possibly dry up or your home value to drop? These are very real possibilities. Please support us by denying this request, and letting us continue to breathe the fresh Colorado mountain air we now enjoy. Thank you for your time and consideration of this letter.

Sincerely,

Gerry Klein
 11580 Calle Corvo
 Colorado Springs, Colorado 80926
 719-375-4144



STATE OF
COLORADO

Eschberger - DNR, Amy <amy.eschberger@state.co.us>

Permit #M-2016-010

2 messages

Gerry Klein Glass <gerryklein777@gmail.com>

Tue, Apr 12, 2016 at 12:21 PM

To: Amy.Eschberger@state.co.us

Dear Ms. Eschberger,

I would like to submit this letter to object to the proposed Hitch Rack Quarry Project #M-2016-010.
Please consider this letter electronically signed as a duplicate signed hard copy will be sent in the mail.

Thank you,

Gerry Klein
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My CDRMS Letter.docx

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Eschberger - DNR, Amy <amy.eschberger@state.co.us>

Thu, Apr 14, 2016 at 8:50 AM

To: Gerry Klein Glass <gerryklein777@gmail.com>

Cc: Wally Erickson - DNR <wally.erickson@state.co.us>

Hi Gerry,

I have received your timely objection and will add it to the permit file. I appreciate your participation in the application review process for the proposed Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry (Permit No. M-2016-010).

Thanks,

Amy Eschberger
Environmental Protection Specialist



COLORADO

**Division of Reclamation,
Mining and Safety**

Department of Natural Resources

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