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Michael & Cynthia Heer
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RECEIVED

April 13, 2016

APR 18 2016

Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
1313 Sherman Street, Room 215
Denver, Colorado 80203
Attn: Ms. Amy Eschberger

DIVISION OF RECLAMATION
MINING AND SAFETY

Re: Transit Mix Concrete Company application for Reclamation Permit, Hitch Rack Ranch
Quarry (# M2016010)

Dear Ms. Eschberger,

I am writing to express my opposition to the referenced quarry permit application. I live in the Piñons of Turkey Cañon Ranch, just south of the proposed Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry operation.

I, along with all my neighbors within the Piñons, am opposed to bringing yet another aggregate mining operation to our community, in addition to the three quarries already in service along a five mile stretch of Highway 115. Significant barriers to additional quarry development exist in the area, including limited, very fragile water supplies derived from a fragile groundwater system, rich and unique vegetation and wildlife resources, public health and safety, air and noise contamination, compromised transportation within the community, exacerbated traffic hazards along Highway 115, existing quarries that can satisfy the demand, violation of current development plans for the area, proximity to local residents, and limited or no alternatives for residents.

Water Supply. All residents along the Highway 115 corridor depend on ground water for their domestic water supply. With the exception of Red Rock Valley, Rock Creek Mesa and the Piñons of Turkey Canon Ranch (which are on central well systems), residents are served by individual wells. These wells likely depend on the fracture system within the granitic rock for water supply; wells in the adjacent upturned sedimentary rocks may depend upon both these fracture systems and infiltration along the granite-sedimentary rock boundary for recharge. This situation makes such wells dependent on the quality of the recharging surface water and highly susceptible to disruption and contamination. Contamination from mining operations can travel very quickly through the fracture system to affect domestic wells. The very geology and topography of the proposed Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry site makes such effects exceedingly difficult to predict, and of disruptions occur, exceedingly likely to be unrepairable, despite the applicant's assurances of "cure". Further, the effect from blasting operations (which Transit Mix proposes to conduct two or three times each week) on the fracture system will likely exacerbate the problem, and is equally difficult to predict; certainly equally or more probable to disrupt as to not. Historical evidence along the Front Range and particularly the Highway 115 corridor indicate things like building the Cheyenne Mountain military complex and mild earthquakes have disrupted water flows entirely or very significantly.

Wildlife. An independent and objective wildlife study needs to be completed, rather than accept questionable statements by the applicant – numerous discrepancies exist in the application. The proposed quarry site is adjacent to and contiguous with the Aiken Canyon Preserve (managed by the Nature Conservancy of Colorado), and included as part of the Aiken Canyon Potential Conservation Area. This area is identified by the Colorado Natural Heritage Program as a B2 site – Very High significance. It should be noted that the Nature Conservancy shares our opposition to the quarry permit. The quarry site is an area rich in wildlife. It lies between large concentrations

of wildlife in the federal lands to the West and Fort Carson to the East, and serves as a major migration route between the two ecotypes. It is inhabited by a great diversity and in some cases high density of wildlife. Most notably, the site is mapped by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as Critical Potential Conservation Habitat for the Mexican Spotted Owl, a federally listed threatened species. The Mexican Spotted Owl has been documented in the immediate area. The applicant's statement that "turkeys are not common in the mining area" is ludicrous. Anyone who lives here or frequents this area knows it harbors one of the largest concentrations of wild turkeys in this part of Colorado. Sighting of turkeys is an almost daily occurrence here. Turkeys, in particular, are intolerant of industrial operations such as mining. Colorado Parks and Wildlife identifies the proposed quarry site as a primary elk residence and migration area. More than 100 species of birds have been documented using the area, and the stream corridors are known to be important movement areas for wide-ranging animals such as mountain lions, black bear, mule deer, and elk. There are unconfirmed reports of the presence of Canada Lynx, an endangered species recently reintroduced into Colorado, in the area. The proposed mining plan does not appear to provide an adequate buffer to protect the use of intermittent stream corridors by these sensitive species.

Vegetation. Whoever prepared the vegetation analysis sections of the application apparently didn't spend much time on the site. The quarry site provides high quality foothills plant communities that are rapidly being converted to development north and south of this area. The dry (xeric) tallgrass sites along the Front Range are also rarely found in the high quality condition in evidence at this site. It contains excellent to good examples of globally-imperiled mountain mahogany/needlegrass community, an excellent occurrence of globally vulnerable piñon pine/Scribner needlegrass community, as well as an excellent occurrence of mesic oak thicket community. The lodgepole pine and blue spruce mentioned repeatedly in the application do not appear in significant numbers, while the white pine, which is very common at the site, is not mentioned at all. As noted by The Nature Conservancy, "reclamation" of this area after mining will in all probability NOT adequately restore the vegetation ecosystem.

Noise and Air Contamination. 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; trucks are loaded and unloaded. The process and heavy machinery required to mine is intrusive and creates significant noise and air pollution, thus having a direct impact on the surrounding areas and community. Air quality is compromised and diminished by the fugitive dust associated with aggregate mining. Dust generated by mining often contains silica, a common naturally occurring crystal found in most rock beds. Prolonged exposure to silica may result in silicosis. According to the Centers for Disease Control, "silicosis 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 the 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. This is a health issue for the abutting and nearby residential home owners and their livestock. Numerous residents in the immediate area of the mining have existing respiratory disabilities, which can be documented in detail in subsequent inputs to DRMS.

Transportation. Transportation in the Highway 115 area is unique in that the normal hierarchy of roads does not exist. Highway 115 is the lifeline upon which residents depend. It is the only means of transportation into, out of, and within the community. There are no other alternatives, and residents cannot avoid using Highway 115 for their life-sustaining transportation needs. Thus, the condition and safety of Highway 115 are primary concerns of all residents. According to the El Paso County Major Transportation Corridors Plan (MTCP), Highway 115 south of Fort

Carson's main gate is functionally classified as "congested". Major sections of the highway are two lanes, including the point at which Transit Mix proposes to access the highway. The proposed highway access point is also located at a historically dangerous place, with multiple fatal traffic accidents in recent years. Unfortunately, the 2040 MTCP Roadway Plan does not call for any improvements to Highway 115 through the year 2040, so the highway we have now is what we will live with for many years to come. If the Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry is allowed to proceed, an already congested highway, currently bearing truck traffic from three active quarries, will be burdened by as many as 624 additional trucks per day when the quarry is at full production. This additional traffic will exacerbate traffic hazards not only for the local residents, but also for the many commuters who use this major thoroughfare to Colorado Springs, as well as the many tourists, bicyclists, and motorcycle clubs who frequent the area for its unique geographic/topologic and aesthetic appeal.

Existing Quarries. There are currently three quarries operating within a five mile stretch along Highway 115, the nearest less than three miles from the proposed Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry site. The quarry operators report they are currently operating at roughly half their capacity. When questioned why such low production, the response is "insufficient demand". This calls into question the need for yet another quarry on the backs of the already burdened local residents. Surely the real, proven need for more aggregate mining is a necessary component to approving such a detrimental activity in people's front yard.

Proximity to Local Residents. There are more than 140 properties within two miles of the proposed quarry site, some as close as 1200 feet and with direct line-of-sight to the quarry operations. The vast majority, if not all, of these property owners are vehemently opposed to the applicant's quarry plans. The policies incorporated in the El Paso County Southwestern Highway 115 Comprehensive Plan (see below) state "any resource extraction operation should be located a minimum of two miles distant from any dissenting residents". A petition is in process at the present time to be presented when complete to document the near-unanimous opposition by residents along a 15-mile stretch of Highway 115 to this permit. This means over 500 residents feel impacted negatively by this application, particularly in the matter of declining real estate values, which will be documented in subsequent inputs.

Comprehensive Development Plan. This application for permit is in clear violation of the current Southwestern (Highway 115) Comprehensive Plan. This is a plan commissioned and adopted by the El Paso County Board of County Commissioners for the Highway 115 area. This comprehensive plan foresaw the potential for future demands for mineral resource extraction in the area, and adopted specific policies to address it. The Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry application is in specific violation of the following policies in this plan:

1. The entire burden of proof for demonstrating the existence of extractable mineral resources should lie with the applicant. Designation of potentially extractable mineral resources in the Master Plan for the Extraction of Commercial Mineral Deposits should in no way be seen as a justification or an implied right for mining.
2. Resource extraction operations in general are not supported in the planning area. However, the presence of existing operations is recognized, and if future conditions dictate the necessity for additional supplies of aggregate, the expansion of existing operations is preferred over new quarries.
3. At no time during their operations should resource extraction affect the quantity, quality, or dependability of residents' existing water supplies or result in the diversion of existing water supplies. The full burden of proof for assuring this will lie with the applicant.
4. Access from Highway 115 to any resource extraction operation should not affect the quality of the existing access to area residents.

5. Unless it can be demonstrated that topography will shield existing residents from visual, noise, and dust impacts, all resource extraction operations should be located a minimum of two miles distant from any dissenting residents.
6. Wildlife and wildlife protection routes should be protected through the development of a wildlife overlay zone, addressing the need for protecting critical habitat areas.
7. Development should not be allowed in riparian areas, both because the hazard of flooding and because of their exceptionally high wildlife values. Any drainage improvements undertaken in the area should be treated in the most natural way possible to minimize any impacts on riparian areas.
8. The specific area of Aiken Canyon is identified as a unique and significant biological resource of statewide significance that should continue to be preserved. Preservation is not compatible with most public access, and management should maximize wildlife and scientific values.

No Alternatives. Residents in close proximity to the proposed quarry have no other alternatives but their status quo. They have but one source of water, their individual wells. They have but one route of ingress and egress to their properties, Little Turkey Creek Road. They have but one transportation corridor into and out of the community, Highway 115. Even routine operations of a Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry will have a significant, detrimental impact on residents. For example, blasting operations, which Transit Mix proposes to conduct two or three times each week, will require closing Little Turkey Creek Road, precluding the owners and residents of 43 lots from leaving or returning to their properties. More severe catastrophes run the risk of closing the only highway and/or effectively sealing off access to properties in the area. What happens when residents have emergencies in these times of blocked access? Not addressed by the applicant.

While we understand the importance of aggregate to a growing Colorado Springs community, we feel our unique community is already sufficiently burdened with three quarries operating in our midst, not to mention the constant training activities of our Fort Carson neighbors. We accept our current state of affairs. Bringing another large-scale quarry operation to our community is a bridge too far. In closing, the applicant has not provided any concrete plans, commitments, or bond proposals to mitigate these very likely detrimental events. It is recognized that some of these objection items are not covered by the DRMS rules and regulations pertaining to mining permitting; they will be, however, continue to be presented during the entire El Paso County approval process, should DRMS somehow find this unnecessary application viable.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,



Michael and Cynthia Heer
16292 Cala Rojo Dr., Colorado Springs, CO 80926
719-540-9917
The Piñons of Turkey Cañon Ranch

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

(not dated)

Objections to Permitting Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry
Permit Number M-2016-010
Ms. Amy Eschberger Lead Specialist

Prepared by Jerry P Moore
15836 Spanish Peak Vw
Colorado Springs, CO 80926
832-875-7030
832-875-7020


Jerry P Moore

and


Karen B Moore

With three quarries currently in operation within eight miles of the proposed site for the Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry, and the existing quarries operating at well below capacity, the sole purpose for this application is to increase revenue for Transit Mix. If this quarry permit is not approved there will be no negative consequences to ANYONE else.

Impact If Permit is Denied:

- Critical habitat for threatened species not destroyed
- Site of high conservation significance not destroyed
- No additional injuries and fatalities from dramatic increases in truck traffic on 115
- No possible loss of domestic water supplies
- No noise pollution
- No dust pollution
- No loss of ingress and egress control by property owners
- Transit Mix makes less money

Geologic and Hydrologic Reasons for Not Approving Application

Risk to Residents' Ground Water Supply

As an exploration geologist I have spent a significant portion of my forty year career attempting to predict and understand hydrocarbon fault traps as well as fractured reservoirs. Although all of my professional experience dealt with hydrocarbons, I believe my understanding of fractured reservoirs and faults as fluid barriers are applicable to ground water as well.

The only source of household/domestic water in the area is water wells. The primary aquifer is the Pikes Peak Granite, which produces from fractures in the crystalline rock. Other wells have been completed in localized alluvium lenses and in the Fountain Sandstone, but could be expected to be in communication with the primary aquifer. Most of these wells are marginal producers, typically under 10 CFM, with many requiring a cistern to meet normal household needs. This is a fragile water system requiring protection. The Westcliffe earthquake (2008, magnitude 2.5, 48 miles southwest of the proposed quarry location) caused a water well in the area of the proposed quarry location to immediately quit producing and required a new well to be drilled. Although on a larger scale but in the same hydrological environment, the granite removal which took place during the building of the NORAD complex stopped most of the ground water supply to large areas down gradient.

The permit should not be approved for many reasons, but my objections here will be geologic and hydrologic. Because of the complex structural geologic setting and the characteristics of the aquifer system, a quarry operation at this location has a significant possibility of disrupting or diverting ground water and surface water. If this happens it is impossible to predict how it would impact the surrounding domestic water wells.

- The billion-plus years of almost continuous structural deformation and uplift surrounding the Pikes Peak batholith has created an area of fractured rock and a very faulted terrain.
- The proposed area to be quarried is at the intersection of major faults and aquifers in fractured rock.
- The ground water recharge and surface water is funneled through a canyon that narrows to 300 feet when entering the quarry.
- The flow through the quarry is in and below the Little Turkey Creek creekbed and alluvium. Based on Transit Mix coring, this is a highly fractured fault zone. Deadman Creek has the same situation, with drainage through the quarry in a highly faulted creekbed.

- Based on my experience and the information available on Front Range aquifers, with this degree of fracturing and faulting the surface and ground waters are going to be in communication.
 - In the Pikes Peak granite almost all effective permeability and porosity will be provided by fractures. The amount will vary depending upon the amount of stress and weathering. To some degree this should be true for all the aquifers in the quarry site.
- The intersection of the creek bed fault zones and the thrust faults in these fractured rock aquifers should **not** provide an effective aquitard.
 - If the thrust faults are “sealed” it is very doubtful that sealing would be continuous
 - The fault planes are as likely to provide a conduit as a barrier.

In the setting detailed above and with the removal of 393 acres of material with blasting it is **impossible** to predict that ground water and surface water flow, and therefore aquifer recharge, will not be significantly altered. These changes could cause the stoppage or reduction of the ground water supply to residents.

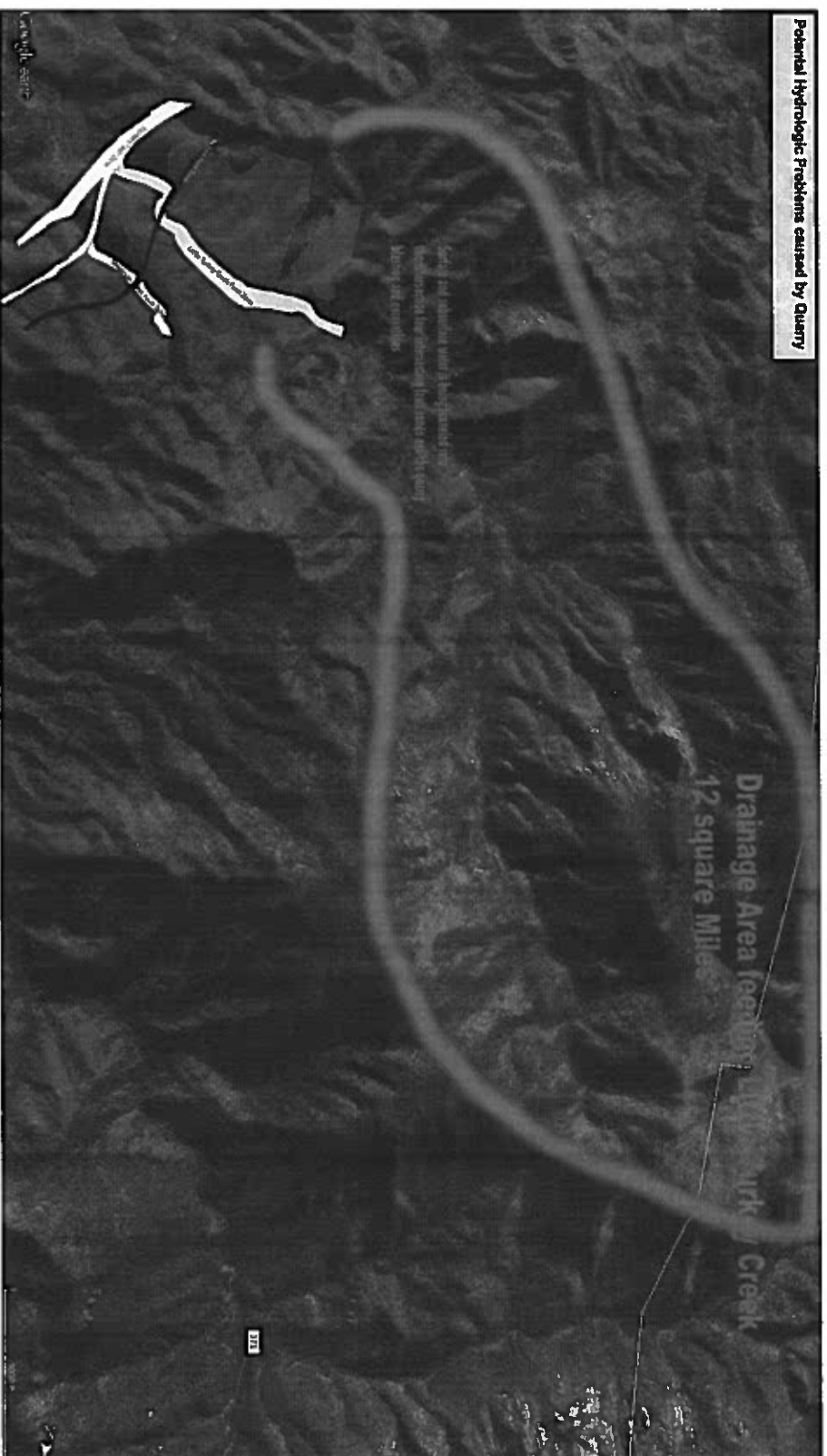


FIGURE A

- Yellow and Black are Thrust Fault System
- Cyan and White are creek fault zones
- Green Cyan Purple Orange are rock removal "pits"

Ground Water Contamination

Disturbing 393 acres provides an entry point for contamination of the surface waters and ground water. Because of fracturing and faulting the surface and ground water are probably in communication to some degree. Any contaminants could easily permeate the localized hydrodynamic system.

Lead contamination

- Larsen Well 185659
 - Not potable water source because of lead
 - 1800 feet from North Ridge Excavation
 - Removal of 100,000,000 tons of stone provides opportunity for pyrite in waste rock to oxidize mobilize the lead allowing it to enter and contaminate surface and ground water
- If well 185659 has a sufficient lead levels to contaminate ground water to levels making not potable how can contamination possibly be controlled 1800 feet down gradient where 100,000,000 bank cubic yards of material are going to be removed?

Equipment leaks and spills

- With the proposed 22 pieces of heavy equipment the opportunity for spills and leaks of diesel, motor oil, or hydraulic fluid to contaminate the ground water and surface water are an additional risk to the area's well water quality.

Rockfall Hazards and Ingress/Egress Blockage

- Colorado Geological Survey Rockfall Hazard Information
 - Definition: Rockfall is the falling of a newly detached mass of rock from a cliff or down a very steep slope. Rocks in a rockfall can be of any dimension, from the size of baseballs to houses.
 - Improper utilization of rockfall areas is any use for which occasional, unpredictable, rolling, bounding, or falling of rocks could constitute a threat to life or property.
 - Areas of potential rockfall are subject to constraints similar to those of active rockfall areas. However, if activation can be prevented, such areas could be used safely, but the cost of protection from the potential hazard can in many cases exceed the economic gain from the change in land use.
 - Man's activities often cause rocks to fall sooner than they would naturally. Excavations into hill and mountainsides for highways and building frequently aggravate rockfalls. Vibration from passing trains or blasting can trigger them, as can changes in surface and ground water conditions. Rockfalls have been attributed to earthquakes and sonic booms.
- Little Turkey Creek Rockfall Hazards
 - Little Turkey Creek canyon has near vertical walls in places and narrows to a few hundred feet. The vertical walls are primarily composed of the highly fractured Pikes Peak Granite and possible unmapped faults. With regular blasting in the quarry acting as a trigger, the rockfall hazard would be greatly increased.
 - The only access to the homes and cabins in the canyon above the proposed quarry site is an unpaved road following the creek bed. With the canyon narrowing, the road is forced to approach the base of the vertical canyon walls. The width and character of the roadbed and the stream do not permit any vehicle traffic to maneuver.
 - The confinement and proximity of the vertical walls would:
 - Make travel dangerous
 - A medical emergency in the canyon could block individuals in the canyon without emergency vehicle access or evacuation.
 - Emergency helicopter service would be difficult and dangerous
 - Map and photos will be provided

Quarry Operations Affecting Access

- With only one road in and out of the canyon normal quarry operations and emergencies would also isolate residents in the canyon
- Resident ingress and egress on a road which the residents own would be completely controlled by quarry operations and decisions
- Currently the residents' access in the canyon is controlled by two security gates. The quarry road would bypass the first security gate, creating an unfavorable security environment for the residents.

Refutation of BBA Water Consultants Executive Summary of Potential Ground and Surface Impacts

Note: Numbered paragraphs below are copied from the BBA Water Consultants report. Underlined items in those paragraphs are items I am addressing in my refutation. My refutations are italicized and underlined immediately following the BBA sections. Refer to Figure B on the following page for the Transit Mix geologic interpretation used by the BBA consultants.

1. The operation of the proposed quarry is not expected to directly affect surface or ground water systems.

What exactly do "not expected to" and "directly affect" mean? What assurance is that to the property owners?

2. Test drilling at the property performed for Transit Mix did not reveal saturated bedrock conditions within the mining interval and, therefore, mining will probably not impact surface or ground water systems by intercepting ground water.

The test coring was done using water based mud in a highly fractured zone. This makes the statements about "highly productive aquifer zones not encountered", "no ground water interception", and "probably not impact surface or ground water systems" a guess based on easily misinterpreted data.

3. Mining operations will be limited to areas 100 feet away and elevations 10 feet above the existing channel of Little Turkey Creek, the primary drainage within the property. Mining will not induce seepage from the creek and will not directly impact flow in the creek. Mining adjacent to Deadman Creek will extend below the elevation of the creek (subject to the 100 foot setback), but the creek is typically dry and saturated conditions therefore do not exist immediately below the streambed. There is not a hydraulic connection between the streambed and the deeper aquifer system and, therefore, mining will not interact with this drainage.

The 100 foot lateral and 10 foot vertical separations are not sufficient aquitards in this structural setting to support the statements that I have highlighted in the above paragraphs. Fractured crystalline rock sitting on highly brecciated faulted creek beds that intersect with a regional thrust fault system make the effectiveness unpredictable. Also, after blasting and removal of 393 acres of granite, it is possible that communication may be created between isolated aquifers if they were not already.

4. The proposed quarry area will maintain existing drainages such that existing precipitation and surface runoff flow paths will be maintained. Surface water present in drainage ways will not be intercepted.

In this structural setting, where the hydrodynamics of the surface and subsurface are probably connected to some degree, you cannot make statements like the above with any degree of certainty.

5. A seep area with two existing springs within the proposed quarry area will be mined out, but water discharged from the springs will continue to drain to Little Turkey Creek.

With the blasting in this fractured and faulted area it is impossible to state as fact that the discharge will all continue to drain into Little Turkey Creek.

6. Based on the available geologic information and information provided by Transit Mix, nearby wells in the vicinity of and west of the mine produce water from geologic fault zones associated with the drainages. The proposed quarry will not intersect the drainages and will therefore not directly interact with these fault zones. As stated above, mining is not expected to intercept ground water. For these reasons, mining will have little potential to impact nearby wells.

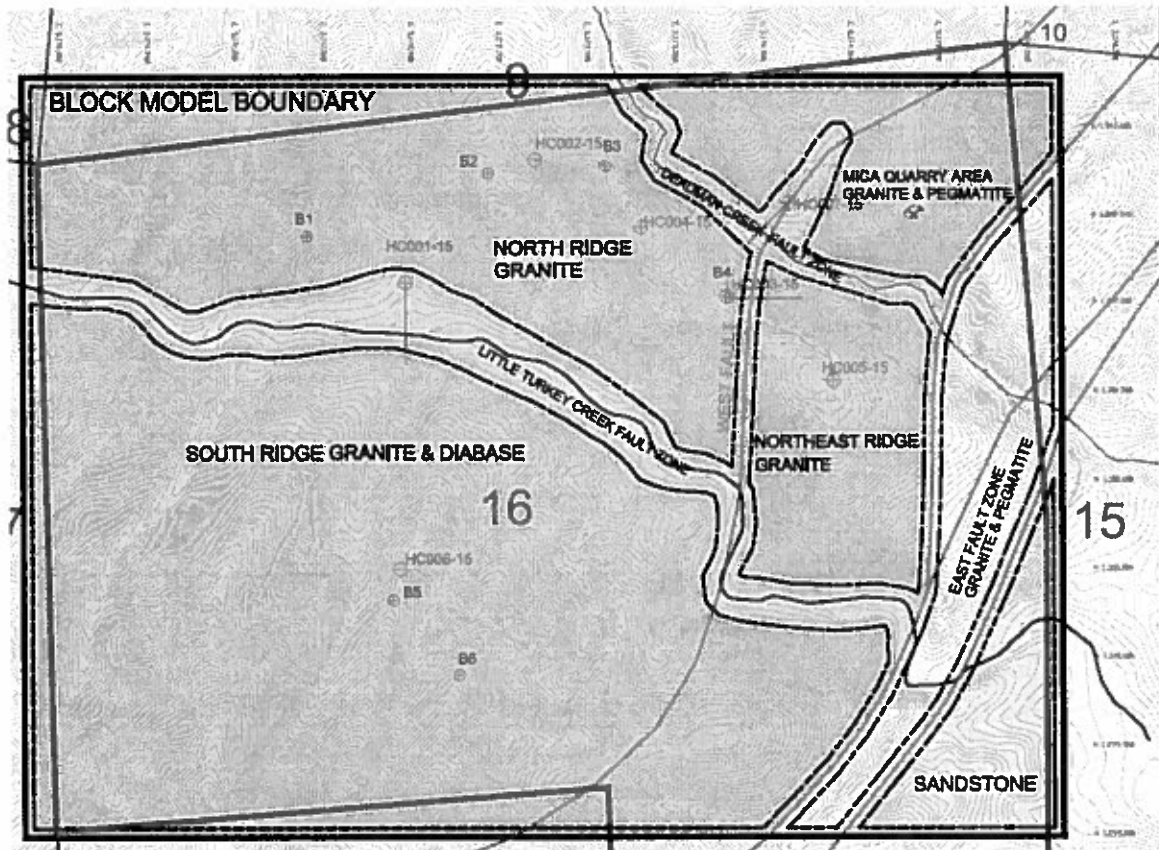
There is insufficient geologic information to know specifically the source of the water produced by the wells in the vicinity and west of the mine. It is possible that the alluvium, sandstone, crystalline fractured granite, and brecciated fault zone are all connected by fractures and faults.

7. Water demand at the site will be limited to sanitary uses within an office and dust suppression of the quarry roads. The mining plan does not include the exposure of ground water or washing of mined rock product. The currently proposed water source for these water uses is water purchased from Colorado Spring Utilities that will be trucked to the site. *Local ground and surface water sources will not be developed for water supply, therefore, there is no potential for depletion to local ground and surface water supplies or water rights.*

Are they planning to use the property's ground water or not? On page G-16, it states the following, which is in direct contradiction to the above statement:

"Water needs for the operation include dust control on the roads and in the crushing and screening process. Water will be recycled whenever practical. The water usage plan prevents impacts to downstream water rights holders, and the sediment pond outlet works prevent impacts to water quality. The primary source of water will likely be via purchase from Colorado Springs Utilities with water hauled from Colorado Springs and stored on site. The Hitch Rack Ranch owns surface and ground water rights, and Transit Mix is evaluating the potential for future use of these waters. Transit Mix may in the future also install groundwater wells on the property to provide a supplemental water supply. Wells would be installed to prevent impacts to existing nearby water wells."

Figure B
Transit Mix Geology Interpretation



April 12, 2016

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

Dear Ms. Amy Eschberger;

The proposed Reclamation and Mining development at Hitch Rack Ranch; submitted by Transit Mix Concrete Company, Permit No. M-2016-010, would bring a large-scale aggregate mining development unnecessarily close, and abutting in at least two areas, to residential neighborhoods. Quarry development brings significant, *long-term* consequences to the environment, public health, safety, and well-being due to: substantially increased truck traffic, dust, and noise pollution, to an area that is known for its strapped natural resources - water, and highest fire danger area. All the while, juxtaposed to the area's unparalleled natural beauty, abundant wildlife, wildlife habitats, and wildlife migratory trails, make this development both undesirable and unsustainable. As a resident of Red Rock Valley Estates Neighborhood, I cannot support this development and; therefore, am opposed to the development for the following reasons:

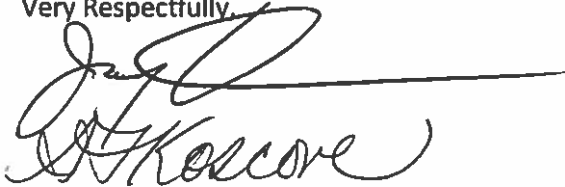
- Quarrying requires drilling and blasting with explosives, which create vibrations, noise, and dust. Once this process is completed, rock crushing machines crush the rock, conveyor belt machines move the rock around the processing plant; trucks are loaded and unloaded. The process and heavy machinery required to mine, is intrusive and creates significant noise and air pollution; thus having a direct impact on the surrounding areas and community.
- Air quality is compromised and diminished by the dust that will be created with aggregate mining. Not only will the dust aggravate residents with asthma, COPD, and other lung-related conditions, it will also create a constant menace to pets and livestock that remain outdoors at all times.
- The proposed quarry will create increased truck traffic by approximately 624 trucks per day, in addition to the existing truck traffic from the three operating quarries. This will create traffic hazards detrimental to the safety of County residents as well as 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.
- Currently there are three existing quarries within an 8 mile radius; these quarries are currently operating at half their capacity. A better plan; and a plan that would have less impact to the community and surrounding area would be to expand the existing quarries. This would also be consistent with our Master Plan – Southwestern/Highway 115 Comprehensive Plan. Transit Mix also owns a quarry site in Canon City. This site could be used to fill their mining needs, and they

could potentially use the existing train line to transport materials. This would lower the environmental impact exponentially.

- Wildlife, wildlife habitats, wildlife migratory paths and biodiversity will be lost. An environmental study needs to be completed, rather than take the word of the applicant, that there are no endangered species located on the land or nearby lands. The proposed quarry site could be in violation of the Federal and State Endangered Species Act. The Mexican Spotted Owl, is State and federally threatened, and has been identified in the Southwestern/Highway 115 Corridor.
- Moving dirt and extracting rock from the ground alters the flow of water runoff. The abutting neighborhoods depend strictly on well water supplies for all their water needs. There is potential for well contamination and/or damage, or complete loss from nearby blasting, contamination from blowing dust, and water runoff. Additionally, the heavy equipment necessary for quarrying, and that uses gasoline, diesel, oil and transmission fluids; can potentially leak these fluids. Small amounts to larger spills can contaminate 100' to 1000's of gallons of ground water.

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.

Very Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe & Suzie Koscove", with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Joe & Suzie Koscove
11545 Calle Corvo
Colorado Springs, CO 80926
719-492-0030

April 12, 2016

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

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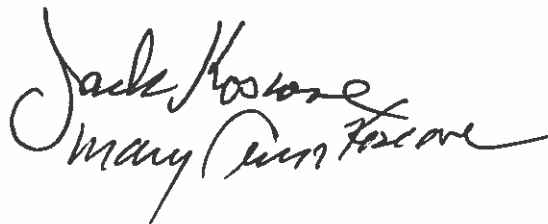
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- Currently there are three existing quarries within an 8 mile radius; these quarries are currently operating at half their capacity. A better plan; and a plan that would have less impact to the community and surrounding area would be to expand the existing quarries. This would also be consistent with our Master Plan – Southwestern/Highway 115 Comprehensive Plan. Transit Mix also owns a quarry site in Canon City. This site could be used to fill their mining needs, and they could potentially use the existing train line to transport materials. This would lower the environmental impact exponentially.
- Wildlife, wildlife habitats, wildlife migratory paths and biodiversity will be lost. An environmental study needs to be completed, rather than take the word of the applicant, that there are no endangered species located on the land or nearby lands. The proposed quarry site could be in violation of the Federal and State Endangered Species Act. The Mexican Spotted Owl, is State and federally threatened, and has been identified in the Southwestern/Highway 115 Corridor.
- Moving dirt and extracting rock from the ground alters the flow of water runoff. The abutting neighborhoods depend strictly on well water supplies for all their water needs. There is potential for well contamination and/or damage, or complete loss from nearby blasting, contamination from blowing dust, and water runoff. Additionally, the heavy equipment necessary for quarrying, and that uses gasoline, diesel, oil and transmission fluids; can potentially leak these fluids. Small amounts to larger spills can contaminate 100' to 1000's of gallons of ground water.

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.

Very Respectfully,

Jack & MaryAnn Koscove
15310 South Hwy 115
Colorado Springs, CO 80926
719-579-9383



April 14, 2016

Stephen Sovaiko
11335 Valle Verde Dr
Colorado Springs CO 80926

Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
1313 Sherman Street, Room 215
Denver, CO 80203
Ms. Amy Eschberger:

The proposed Reclamation and Mining development at Hitch Rack Ranch; submitted by Transit Mix Concrete Company, Permit No. M-2016-010, would bring a large-scale aggregate mining development unnecessarily close, and abutting in at least two areas, to residential, [A-5] neighborhoods. Quarry development brings significant, *long-term* consequences to the environment, public health, safety, and well-being of the effected and adjoining neighborhoods due to: substantially increased truck traffic, dust, and noise pollution, to an area that is known for its strapped natural resources - water, and highest fire danger area. All the while, juxtaposed to the area's unparalleled natural beauty, abundant wildlife, wildlife habitats, and wildlife migratory trails, make this development both undesirable and unsustainable. As a resident of Red Rock Valley Estates Neighborhood, a ***Volunteer Firefighter with the SW Hwy 115 Fire Protection District who trains for more than 300 hours per year without compensation to protect this area, and a Red Rock Valley Estates Water District elected Board member who is sworn to protect our adjacent water sources, yet was never notified of this project until the recent public notice***, I cannot support this development and; therefore, 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; trucks are loaded and unloaded. The process and heavy machinery required to mine, is intrusive and creates significant noise and air pollution; thus having a direct impact on the surrounding areas and community.
- Air quality is compromised and diminished by the fugitive dust associated with aggregate mining. Dust generated by mining often 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. This is a health issue for the abutting and nearby residential home owners and their livestock.

- The proposed quarry will create increased truck traffic by approximately 624 trucks per day, in addition to the existing truck traffic from the three operating quarries. This will create traffic hazards detrimental to the safety of County residents as well as 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.
- Currently there are three existing quarries within an 8 mile radius; these quarries are currently operating at half their capacity. A better plan; and a plan that would have less impact to the community and surrounding area would be to expand the existing quarries. This would also be consistent with our Master Plan – Southwestern/Highway 115 Comprehensive Plan.
- Wildlife, wildlife habitats, wildlife migratory paths and biodiversity will be lost. An environmental study needs to be completed, rather than take the word of the applicant, that there are no endangered species located on the land or nearby lands. The proposed quarry site could be in violation of the Federal and State Endangered Species Act. The Mexican Spotted Owl, "*Strix occidentalis lucida*", is State and federally threatened, and has been identified in the Southwestern/Highway 115 Corridor.
- Moving dirt and extracting rock from the ground alters the flow of water runoff. The abutting neighborhoods depend strictly on well water supplies for all their water needs. There is potential for well contamination and/or damage, or complete loss from nearby blasting, contamination from blowing dust, and water runoff. Additionally, the heavy equipment necessary for quarrying, and that uses gasoline, diesel, oil and transmission fluids; can potentially leak these fluids. Small amounts to larger spills can contaminate 100' to 1000's of gallons of ground water. ***The proposal adversely impacts and threatens the Red Rock Valley Estates Water District as documented in the State-approved Source Water Protection Plan for PWS ID 121700.***

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 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 object and am opposed to the proposed quarry development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sovaiko", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Stephen Sovaiko
11335 Valle Verde Drive
Colorado Springs CO 80926
719-540-6381