

STATE OF
COLORADO

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

Opposition to M2016010 - Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry

2 messages

Troy Day <troy.day@startmail.com>

Sun, Apr 17, 2016 at 11:19 AM

To: wally.erickson@state.co.us, amy.eschberger@state.co.us

April 17, 2016

Wally Erickson (Amy Eschberger)
Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
1313 Sherman Ave., Room 215, Denver, CO 80203
wally.erickson@state.co.us; amy.eschberger@state.co.us

Dear Sir/Ma'am,

I write to you to share my opposition to the proposed Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry (application M2016010) along the west side of highway 115, south of Colorado Springs. I am firmly against this action on the basis of negative impacts to water quality/supply, as well as negative impacts to air quality, noise, highway safety, and personal out of pocket costs. The proposed quarry will create new impacts and further aggravate existing impacts caused by three other nearby existing quarries along the highway 115 corridor.

My wife and I bought a home approximately 1 mile due east from the proposed quarry site one year ago in April of 2015 in the Red Rocks Estates neighborhood. The proposal submitted for consideration for the Hitch Rack Ranch quarry is a broad brush to address law and regulation, but does not address the specific realities of day to day life for those who live in the vicinity of the existing three quarries already operating in this area. We need not read the proposal to imagine the possible impacts to those that live in this area, rather we need only look at the realities that already exist. Existing quarries have been built three times. The cumulative impact of those existing operations are already present and so it is not surprising that there is such resistance in our community to a fourth quarry.

The proposed quarry will impact the water supplies downstream of the quarry. Red Rock Estates is one community that uses ground water to supply over 90 lots within two miles of the proposed quarry site in the Dead Man Creek water shed. The water wells are at a lower elevation than the quarry. There is no way to know what underground paths carry water to our wells. In addition, the faulting between the quarry site and our underground supply create a very unpredictable profile of water flow. Possible contamination and/or loss of supply due to quarry activity would be a devastating loss of a basic resource to our homes and it is an unnecessary risk to our community.

Colorado is a dusty place and my wife suffers from allergies. We moved from the downtown area in Colorado Springs in part to get away from the allergens we encountered there. She suffers burning/itchy feet, hives all over her body, and swelling of her face due to these allergies. Common sense tells me it will not be improved with another mine creating dust one mile up wind of our house.

Mining creates sparks. Sparks from blasting, metal touching rock, metal touching metal, rock hitting rock, and heavy equipment. The proposed site is surrounded by forest and scrub lands. I look to the next 50 years and wonder if the right mix of drought, and fuel, and wind, and sparks will start a fire that cannot be controlled. We already have this risk next to our community from Fort Carson and we pay the insurance premiums related to it, and we stay fire wise within our means. I cannot say that mining will cause a fire in the next 50 years, but common sense tells me it will not mitigate the risk, it will only heighten the risk.

Just before sunup, the sound of engines gunning up the hill at mile marker 35 begins and it continues throughout the day. Some of those engines are diesel and some belong to empty trucks headed south to the quarries. The sound of jake brakes comes from trucks that are headed north down that same hill. They don't go away in the winter like the birds. In fact, they seem louder as the leaves fall off the trees. Despite the 'Engine Brake Mufflers Required' sign at the top of the hill, those brakes are still un-muffled and loud. No planning document will

mention that, no sign will mitigate it, and no regulation can stop the noise. Hundreds of more trucks will increase this noise pollution.

I commute daily to and from Colorado Springs on Hwy 115 and my windshield has been chipped four times since we moved here last year. At first I didn't feel a need to replace the glass because it was a small round impact on the far right passenger side. It was a small annoyance and I wanted to avoid an out of my pocket expense. Later in the summer I noticed another chip and I started putting away money to replace the glass. I'm glad I did not yet replace my windshield because a stone kicked up by a vehicle took a big chip out of the top center this winter, and again this spring. Now my windshield has been damaged four times since I moved here. I will pay for a new windshield, and it seems I may need to do this often.

To summarize my opposition, I think there is a cumulative impact due to all three quarries that is not documented and is a burden to the residents of the 115 corridor. The risk of water contamination and supply is unacceptable. The risk of fire is great. The addition of many more trucks to highway 115 is unsafe and a direct maintenance expense. The residents along the 115 corridor deal with the impacts of all three quarries and I refuse to put up with a fourth quarry. Please say NO to Hitch Rack Ranch Quarry (M2016010).

Respectfully,
Troy L. Day

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receipt confirmation requested

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Tue, Apr 19, 2016 at 10:05 AM

Follow up submittal due to CDRMS system shut down...

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