



Douglas Mountain Ranch - Gravel Pit Opposition.

1 message

John Enochs <johne@diamondbackeng.com> Thu, Dec 6, 2018 at 4:37 PM  
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Cc: "Linda Enochs (ljenochs@gmail.com)" <jlenochs@gmail.com>

All,  
  
Please find attached our letters of opposition to the proposed Douglas Mountain Ranch gravel pit.  
  
Feel free to contact me with any questions.  
  
Thank you,  
  
John

John Enochs  
  
Diamondback Engineering & Surveying, Inc.  
  
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2 attachments

-  Air Letter DMR Mine.pdf  
76K
-  2 WATER Objection Letter-JE Comments.pdf  
56K

**Linda and John Enochs**  
PO Box 203  
14407 US Highway 40  
Empire, CO 80438

December 6, 2018

TO: Colorado Parks and Wildlife NE Region  
ATTN: Mr. Joe Walter – District Wildlife Manager; [joseph.walter@state.co.us](mailto:joseph.walter@state.co.us)  
6060 Broadway, Denver CO 80216  
State Representative KC Becker: [kcbecker.house@state.co.us](mailto:kcbecker.house@state.co.us)  
State Senator Kevin Grantham: [kevin.grantham.senate@state.co.us](mailto:kevin.grantham.senate@state.co.us)  
Wild Sheep Foundation (WSF); Terry Myers: [info@wildsheepfoundation.org](mailto:info@wildsheepfoundation.org)  
Rocky Mountain Bighorn Society (RMBS): [rmbs@bighornsheep.org](mailto:rmbs@bighornsheep.org)  
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation; Seth Gallagher – Manager, Rocky Mountain  
Regional Programs: [Seth.gallagher@nfwf.org](mailto:Seth.gallagher@nfwf.org)  
Peregrine Fund: [tpf@peregrinefund.org](mailto:tpf@peregrinefund.org)  
Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS); Mike Lester - State Forester and Director:  
[Mike.Lester@colostate.edu](mailto:Mike.Lester@colostate.edu)  
Colorado Wildlife Federation; Suzanne O'Neill: [cwfed@coloradowildlife.org](mailto:cwfed@coloradowildlife.org)  
Evergreen Naturalists Audubon Society; Kathy Madison - Board President:  
[president@evergreenaudubon.org](mailto:president@evergreenaudubon.org)  
Rocky Mountain Angling Club (RMAC): [rmangling@gmail.com](mailto:rmangling@gmail.com)  
Department of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety; Peter Hays: [peter.hays@state.co.us](mailto:peter.hays@state.co.us)

RE: Douglas Mountain Ranch Mining Project, Permit #M2018016 with the Department of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety (DRMS)

We write to you in opposition to the proposed Douglas Mountain Ranch Mining Project currently under permit review with the DRMS. We believe this proposed mine will damage and deplete the local water systems of Bard Creek, The West Fork of Clear Creek, the Clear Creek Watershed, and the ground water and natural springs on the Douglas Mountain Plateau.

The applicants, Empire Aggregate LLC, have not shown that the water they plan to use for the mining operation has been obtained from a legal source; they have not shown evidence that they have applied for a mining/industrial well permit. They have not done adequate research into the wells in the area nor have they acknowledged the shallow groundwater. This does not instill confidence in the residents of Clear Creek County that the applicants will adhere to strict guidelines when it comes to not exposing groundwater and other safety precautions to protect the groundwater, creek, and watershed area. According to the DRMS, a flood analysis and flood control plan is needed when mining occurs within 400 feet of a river channel, as the floodplain could be altered, and riverside berms have the potential to be damaged during flooding and are prone to erosion. The applicants have not submitted either of the requested documents to

date. Any activity in Colorado's mineral belt that is located near to our watershed needs to be examined closely and requires careful consideration. We do not believe the applicant has shown the consideration needed for a project with the potential to impact the water source responsible for the water quality in Standley Lake Watershed Association's area, and therefore, the drinking water throughout Thornton, Westminster, and Northglenn.

The amended permit application to DRMS M-2018-016, states "All surface water flows that drain to the site (Douglas Mountain Plateau) currently pass across the meadow before draining to the West Fork of Clear Creek to the north. During mining, these flows will be partially intercepted by the mining activity as the operation progresses." The mining operation will divert the ground water, natural springs, and drainage on the plateau along with the natural flow of the West Fork of Clear Creek, impacting the West Clear Creek Watershed Basin (HUC-0103) and the property owners downstream. This is in direct violation of the permit application which states "If mining and reclamation operations affect areas beyond the boundaries of an approved permit boundary, substantial civil penalties can result." DRCOG Metro Vision 2020 Clean Water Plan, Appendix 9 Upper Clear Creek Watershed, states that Empire has the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest municipal wastewater treatment plant in Clear Creek County, and it is located on the West Fork of Clear Creek, on the north edge of the proposed mining site. Changes in the drainage and flow of the creek may have an impact on the function of the treatment plant and need to be looked at further.

Adjacent property owners on the Douglas Mountain Plateau currently have shallow groundwater, which produces lush vegetation and heavily wooded areas. Altering the drainage pattern on the plateau would divert the water away from these properties and devastate the vegetation. Bighorn sheep, elk, deer, moose, black bears, and mountain lions roam the plateau. The threatened greenback cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and brown trout all live in the waters of Clear Creek, which is fed by the West Fork of Clear Creek that runs along the edge of the plateau. Bald eagles, golden eagles, peregrine falcons, ospreys and hawks all soar above the plateau and breed and nest on neighboring mountainsides. This plateau has a rich diversity of wildlife and is important for migration corridors, nesting areas, lambing and calving areas, winter habitat, and denning sites for many species. Removing native vegetation on the plateau would deplete food sources for all wildlife in the area, and the lush vegetation areas on the adjoining properties would be decimated by the disruption of the natural springs and ground water. Bighorn sheep, elk, deer, and moose are spotted and photographed daily on the plateau, drawn by the springs and vegetation, not just on the steep mountainsides. Our wildlife relies on the surface water available on the plateau, along with the food and cover provided by the vegetation.

Due to the massive landscape removal, large artificial flood berms would be built along the edge of the West Fork of Clear Creek, risking sediment washing into the creek and negatively affecting the creek bed. We must maintain our improving fishery, not destroy it. High winds routinely rake the plateau and it will be impossible to prevent dust from filling the air (as happens at the existing nearby Frei gravel pit)., Much of this fugitive dust will ultimately settle in our waterways. Also, we question how the applicants will source enough water to even

attempt (surely unsuccessfully) to keep the dust down during operations and on access roads that will be used by 300 trucks a day.

The proposed bond for the worst-case reclamation scenario from the amended application to the DRMS is \$576,128.00. This number does not include short term sediment control measures for the final removal of the perimeter berm, which should include silt fences and sediment control logs to protect the creek. This number also would not cover additional fines or measures for cleaning up possible water contamination which would do irreparable damage.

The Douglas Mountain Plateau is the only natural, accessible, and undeveloped alluvial plateau in Clear Creek County. It is a unique geological feature, unspoiled by development, which supports many wildlife species and therefore, should be protected. We are urging you to take a firm stance and contact the Department of Reclamation, Mining, and Safety before December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018, to deny the Douglas Mountain Ranch Mining Project.

Sincerely,

John Enochs