

June 30, 2019

Lucas West
Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
101 S. 3rd St., Suite 301
Grand Junction, Co 81501

Re: Von Doose Mine, File No. M-2019-031

Dear Mr. West:

Please accept this letter as an objection to the Reclamation Permit Application from Atlas Mining & Reclamation, LLC on the north slopes of Red Mountain #2. This objection is based on the reality that the planned mining project is contrary to best practices in the restoration of the fragile alpine environment of the Red Mountain Mining District as well as the preservation of the scenery and remnant 19th Century mining history that attracts visitors from around the world to this unique area. I am submitting this letter as past chairman of the Red Mountain Project Task Force, the organization responsible for the securing of approximately \$14,000,000 in LWCF and other funds for the purchase of mining claims to be preserved as open space in the public domain. Protection of the environment, scenery, and history were the motivating factors in this successful multi-jurisdictional project that resulted in some 10,000 acres of mining claims in three counties being preserved as National Forest or County Parkland.

In the attached map, the four patented claims where the Von Doose Mine is to be located are shaded with a yellow color. All of the other internally shaded claims in this illustration are in the public domain through either the RMP or similar process. The claims outlined in blue, totaling slightly more than 100 acres, are the subject of a current acquisition project – partially funded by the Idarado Resource Damage Fund – and are expected to become similarly preserved in coming months. The unshaded claims remain in private ownership and may well become the target of a future LWCF project. The success of the RMP is a clear indication of the broad concern of the public, as well as the land owners who sold their properties, to see this area preserved in its natural state for future generations.

The failure of the Von Doose mine as an economically viable silver mining operation is virtually assured and appears to be anticipated by the applicant in the discussion of groundwater resources and acid mine drainage. However, even if the underground operations are halted at an early stage, the environmental damage done in the ground preparation and construction of three clearly oversized buildings will be consequential in itself. These buildings, which are clearly intended to be repurposed to support back-country recreation, would likely never be approved if evaluated through the County's land use code. A serious concern is that if this applicant is successful in this approach to developing residential and recreational properties in this very sensitive alpine region, the methodology will be repeated by other remaining mining claim owners. The slow recovery of the delicate environment and impacted water quality will inevitably be set back in the process.

Thank you for your consideration,



Robert Risch
Box 601
Ouray, CO.

