

STATE OF
COLORADO

Cazier - DNR, Tim <tim.cazier@state.co.us>

Comments on Permit #P2013002, Grape Creek

1 message

Dave Van Manen <rangerdavebeulah@gmail.com>

Thu, Apr 9, 2020 at 9:24 AM

To: tim.cazier@state.co.us

To Whom it May Concern, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the expansion of gold mine exploration by Zephyr Minerals into BLM public lands in Fremont County that are a part of the Grape Creek Wilderness Study Area and Area of Critical Environmental Concern. These lands are also proposed for Wilderness in the Protecting America's Wilderness Act.

As a long-time resident of a small rural town in southern Colorado, and as a frequent user of our public lands both personally and professionally, I feel that this proposed expansion into this area is wrong for several reasons.

- The expansion will include piping water out of Grape Creek. With low moisture and drought conditions that we see more and more often, this watershed can hardly withstand an additional water use for mining.
- Tourism and outdoor recreation are increasingly becoming important economic drivers for this part of the state. The expansion of this mining operation will negatively impact the budding outdoor recreation industry developing in this area.
- This public land is currently managed and protected as a wildlife corridor of significant naturalness character with unique high desert riparian resources, including its scenic and visual qualities. It is managed to protect Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep and peregrine falcon nesting areas, and is home to a significant population of mountain lions. Allowing this mining expansion will negatively impact the area's wildlife and wilderness qualities.
- At a time when intact natural ecosystems are experiencing significant threats from development and climate change, we need to protect those wild places that remain. This proposed mining expansion is the opposite of how we should manage this public land.

Thank you for considering my comments on this issue,

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