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Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
1313 Sherman St.
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Application by Peak Ranch Resource (File No. M2020041)

Dear Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety,

We have lived and worked in this county for over 40 years. We have seen many changes to this county over that time, both good and bad. Some progress and change are expected, necessary, and understandable. Others may not have considered all the ramifications of their development and have chosen to go forward regardless of the potential negative aspects to the environment, community, and inhabitants. Twenty-five years ago, we settled north of Silverthorne in a rural agricultural/residential area known as the Lower Blue, referencing the Blue River which flows through this area. It is a beautiful, exurban natural area with ranches, federal wilderness areas on both sides of road, an elk refuge area, many areas of protected open space nearby, gorgeous views, and ample wildlife. It was also protected by the Summit County's Lower Blue Master Plan to remain this pristine environment. This plan not only expressed the intent of this community and area, but should provide us continued protection for this area towards those values. Not only did we feel that this location was far enough from town to avoid development, but it also was in a community that believed in leaving surroundings natural and agricultural. Many of the historical ranches have protected this vision with conservation easements. It is with great urgency that we write you to express our extreme displeasure with the proposed Kilgore Companies LLC owned Peak Materials gravel pit aka Peak Ranch Resource and implore you to stop this project before it destroys this wonderful, natural area. This proposed property is in direct view of my home on the other side of the road. It was previously a quiet, peacefully existing horse ranch with horses running throughout the property, which is a stark difference from the proposed gravel pit in all aspects, which I will delineate further.

First, this is not an industrial area, it is a rural agricultural/residential zoned area. These residents, including ourselves, would not have knowingly moved into an industrial zone or an area that could become industrial. These residents are here because it is away from town, congestion, noise, industrial projects, and has been established as an area to remain this way. Furthermore, the noise from the loud trucks, equipment, increased traffic, and backup alarms would be heard from early morning until dark. Noise travels, especially in the wind, which not only effects those within relatively close proximity, but also those that are across the road to many residences, including our own.

Additionally, we are concerned about the disproportionate, excessive use of water with a gravel pit operation. This could potentially drain or put a strain on the limited underground water resource, which will affect all residents, all of whom are on personal wells and some of which already have water storage tanks for the insufficient supply of water. In addition to the abuse of a limited water resource, we have tremendous concern for the potential of polluting of the adjacent Blue River, a valuable fishery and water source for agricultural and consumptive use downstream.

The Blue River is a well-known fishery and pristine river which flows next to the proposed gravel pit location. This river is a valuable fishery for recreation for both residents and visitors, bringing in necessary operating funds for the state. Colorado Parks and Wildlife is currently working to restore its

Gold Medal status, ensuring its importance, desirability, and indispensability for the future. Disturbing this crucial and delicate fishery would be tragic. Not only do we have concerns for the recreational and monetary value of this necessary resource, but it is an essential water resource for people and agriculture downstream. Our valid concern is that there will be pollutants and sediment leaked into the river, posing a very real problem for drinking water down stream, as well as for fish habitat. There is a governmental EPA record of one of Kilgore's companies polluting a stream near their property before (1), not for just one accidental occurrence, but on at least 59 separate occasions over several years! As the Blue River runs alongside the proposed industrial site and since they will be digging down toward the likely shallow water table, it is a real possibility that this could occur here. This would not only be a travesty, but totally unacceptable! No matter what the excuse is for the past pollution offenses, we cannot take the chance of this happening here! Our resources and people should be our first priority, not the individual desires and profits of one company. There definitely would be sediment as well as many other potentially harmful pollutants that could be produced by this project and released, even unwittingly, either via underground waterways or surface runoff into the river. We can prevent this!

Moreover, air pollution, wind-blown dust, diesel fumes, and potentially detrimental particles are also additional major concerns. These would be harmful to all residents and wildlife near this site, especially to those with weakened immune systems or pre-existing respiratory or sinus issues. The pollutants and dust emitted from the gravel yard, trucks and equipment, even if within established limits, could cause long-lasting health issues or exacerbate existing ones. Not only do I have concerns about water and air pollution, but I am also concerned about the potential long-term negative effects on wildlife.

We enjoy a wonderful co-existence with wildlife, with daily sightings of wildlife. I am certain this will not be the case, with the noise and activity of the gravel pit. I expect they will not only avoid that particular property, but potentially a much larger buffer zone. This could permanently alter the wildlife habitats and migration routes, not to mention our personal enjoyment of their presence, another reason as to why people live and visit here. Furthermore, the additional possible 230 truck trips per day on the road to and from the proposed property and their gravel processing plant near Silverthorne, will most certainly have many detrimental effects.

Not only will the increased noise and pollution to residents be incredible, the traffic will be slowed considerably and congested constantly. The continual increased dirt and debris on roads, as well as progressive damage to the roads from the constant heavy truck use will be immeasurable and not reimbursed by Peak Materials, but repaired at the expense of residents' taxes like mine. Taxes will most certainly increase due to the increased need for maintenance and repairs. Furthermore, they currently are parking several trucks daily just outside Silverthorne along the highway, awaiting their turn to enter the Peak Materials Silverthorne site. Where will they park all of the additional trucks, with no large pull-offs near the northern proposed site, and limited shoulder space? Plus, I'm fairly certain this wasn't the intended purpose for the pull-offs along Highway 9. This is not a remote country road with limited traffic. This is a heavily travelled two lane essential highway, which is used by daily commuters, residents, interstate commerce, and visitors. This newly increased traffic, and slower trucks, would exacerbate impatient drivers, which then pass into on-coming traffic, likely increasing accidents with ensuing injuries and deaths on this highway. We have already seen this occurring as a consequence of current Peak Materials trucks on Highway 9. This increased slower truck traffic would seriously impact travel and safety on this highway, with potentially unacceptable consequences. With more trucks and traffic issues, this almost guarantees more wildlife and vehicle collisions, multiplying the already sad figures of animals losing their lives in their attempts to cross the highway on their normal habitual migration routes. It may eventually close off certain migration routes along this corridor, permanently affecting the wildlife that live here. The noise, diesel produced by the louder truck traffic, and dust produced from the pit also inhibits our ability to sit outside or even open windows to catch a breeze or

enjoy the natural environment and wildlife. The livability and marketability of our home would definitely change.

This project not only affects nearby homes, but the perception and desirability of the entire area. It will highly affect our real estate re-sale values and marketability. This would no longer be the rural, pristine paradise that potential buyers would want to live in, and as our home is within direct view, and definitely close enough to be affected by the air, noise and water issues of this proposed project, the value and marketability of our property would be dramatically decreased.

In summary, we implore you to consider all the ramifications and negative aspects of this proposed project, which would seriously affect the resources, residents, visitors, wildlife, and anyone travelling on Highway 9. These are not merely annoying issues potentially produced by this project, but historically validated, realistic concerns for sustainability, potential polluting, and overuse of a crucial, fundamental resource, as well as creating the potential for harmful and life-threatening issues. This is currently one of the few remaining undisturbed areas in Colorado, in fact, one of the places residents and visitors have come to enjoy for its natural beauty and wildlife. It would be a great travesty to do anything that would negatively impact such a resource. As far as the proposed reclamation park for after many years of gravel pit use, we already have a pristine area for enjoyment, and the damage and impacts caused, and possibly lives lost, by the gravel pit and truck traffic, on our wildlife, residents, and environment cannot be reversed. Please consider all these valid, and historically proven, issues and detrimental effects of the proposed gravel pit, and then consider that this is and was a rural agricultural, natural area, that was established as such by use and documented plan. This is not the intent nor the desire of the residents of this area or neighboring water recipients downstream. Please retain this pristine, natural environment for future generations to come and protect our rural environment from unwanted industrial interests. We sincerely appreciate all that you can do to save it.

Sincerely,

Kim Gillespie-Kircher and Eric Kircher
Residents and concerned citizens of the Lower Blue
Mailing address: P.O. Box 3565, Dillon, CO 80435

1. <https://violationtracker.goodjobsfirst.org/violation-tracker/-kilgore-companies-llc>
<https://echo.epa.gov/enforcement-case-report?id=08-2016-0004>

A summary of the above stated pollution case follows.