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RECEIVED

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Travis Marshall
Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
Via email: travis.marshall@state.co.us

GRAND JUNCTION FIELD OFFICE
DIVISION OF
RECLAMATION MINING & SAFETY

Re: 112 Reclamation Permit, Otter Creek Pit

Dear Travis:

After reading the 112 application submitted by United Companies of Mesa County, I am left wondering exactly what is this property going to be reclaimed to? Within the application, the following restored uses are referred to for this site:

- Wildlife (pg i-1)
- Possible Recreation (pg i-1)
 - Aesthetic (pg D-1)
- Potential Housing (pg D-4)
 - Wetlands (pg D-5)

Is the Applicant going to be held to a certain standard of reclamation for all these purposes? If so, exactly where is possible recreation use or potential housing use going to be? How will this land be reclaimed differently than, say for wildlife purposes? The Applicant does not seem to include this information. And what would the aesthetic use reclamation look like? How would that be different than restoration for a 56.6 acre lake, which United Companies describes in their application? There are fewer than a half a dozen or so trees on the property now which will be removed due to mining and then replaced on 2:1 ratio. Are these 12 or so trees on an almost 90 acre site going to be the entire extent of the Applicant's restoration for aesthetic purposes?

While I understand that the Reclamation Board jurisdiction does not extend to land use decisions (which are made at the County level), the Reclamation Board has also defined reclamation as "...provid[ing] for the establishment of a post-mining land use through implementation of reclamation practices."

In this case, Mesa County has already made the decision that the land use of this property is "temporarily" industrial/mining (via the PUD process), and then long term use as residential. It is not within the State's jurisdiction to determine a different land use than what the local government had already approved. This Applicant proposes to the State to reclaim this site for land uses that are different than what Mesa County has already approved. This is quite a problem! The Reclamation Board needs to hold the Applicant accountable for restoration of the land according to the State reclamation standards and practices AND according to the Mesa County land use decisions, not to just approve whatever land use the Applicant has chosen!

Mesa County is requiring the Applicant to submit a revised PUD plan for reclamation and for development of uses that are consistent with the Master Plan. The Mesa County Master Plan approved long term use for this property is residential. According to Mesa County, open space and recreation could be consistent land uses for this property, but it is not the current approved use at this time. Mesa County does have a process in place for changing long term land uses on their Master Plan.

I propose that the Reclamation Board hold the Applicant to State reclamation standards appropriate for long term residential use as dictated by the Mesa County Master Plan (i.e. residential) OR Mesa County should go through its long-term land use planning process to change the land use proposed in United Companies' 112 Reclamation permit.

Mining should NOT be allowed to begin until there are restoration plans that meet the requirements of both the State and Mesa County. This is a very dense residential neighborhood, plus the mining site is directly across the street from an elementary school. If future land use *and* restoration plans are not made now for this property, the many tomorrows of our children will be highly impacted.

Sincerely,
Sue Parker