

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 9/14/2020 9:21:10 PM

First name: Margaret Dawn

Last name: Walker

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my serious concerns & objections to this proposed exploratory drilling project. I have property in the Duquesne sub division which is situated directly above this site.

My concern is about the impact this will have on our precious & already dwindling water supplies. In a Desert region such as this, water is a priceless & precious commodity, no life cannot exist without it.

We do not have a water company or a Central Arizona Project to supply our water. Our water comes from the Aquifer, local extinct mines or off our roofs. Already our wells & ground water levels are running at a very low level. We have had to lower our pump several times this year already. An extremely dry Monsoon season has accentuated this problem. We have only had 7 inches of rain so far instead of the usual 18-20 inches. With Climate change occurring globally this may be the new normal.

Mineral extraction of any kind has the potential to contaminate the Aquifer & reduce water levels. Any reduction in the Aquifer will not only impact local wells but also natural springs, riparian areas & the perennial flow of the Santa Cruz River, which is one of the last free flowing, unspoiled rivers in AZ.

It seems to have been overlooked by many agencies that there are 3 Communities in this area plus many Ranches. Several of these have boundaries adjoining this project. Mine included. All these require water & the amount that is needed should not be underestimated. Most of this area is taken up by grazing, the average cow needs 25-30 gals per day & horse 8-10 gallons per day. Households vary in their consumption but it is estimated each person requires 80-100 gals per day.

The cumulative effect of all the many mining proposals on our water should also be given serious consideration. South 32 have already put in a proposal to pump 1.6 Billion gals a year for the next 4 years!!! They are using tens of thousands of gallons in daily dust suppression on the roads.

Barksdale are proposing to use 3 drilling rigs on their Sunnyside Project, each using 12,500 per day for a period of up to 7 years. Also, 1,500-2,000 gals a day for dust suppression.

Basically, where is all this water going to come from? The answer... Our ground water & it will run to waste.

Now, Barksdale are proposing to drill 10 holes on 5 sites on this project. More water needed.

Barksdale may be proposing to be going to ship water in. It may not come from the immediate area but they won't be going far for it, so I suggest it will be coming out of the same local watershed.

Arizona is on the verge of major water problems as the levels in Lake Mead drop to dangerously low levels.

California is already suffering from extremely low ground water levels & drought. Vast areas that were agriculture are now dust bowls. This should not be allowed to happen to AZ.

The entire area of the San Antonio Project is over 6,000 acres & it is unlikely Barksdale will stop at the present proposal. If they are given a Categorical Exclusion for this particular POA, it will set a precedent for all future proposals. The cumulative effect will have a devastating impact on this entire area & it's watershed. This proposed project should be subject to a full Environmental Assessment, this to include a comprehensive hydrological study.

We hear much use of the 1872 Mining Act. I refer you to the 1897 Organic Act which refers to Forest Service & allows for the proper care, protection & management of the reserves including it's obligation to protect watersheds.

Regards

Dawn Walker