

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 3/27/2021 8:47:32 PM

First name: Christopher

Last name: Lyons

Organization:

Title:

Comments: I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed Sandia Coaster project. Like many New Mexicans, I greatly value the Sandia Wilderness. It is why I moved from Albuquerque to Sandia Park a few years ago. I also recognize the wilderness as an environment that is stressed by climate change and numerous other factors.

I very much fear the environmental impact of the proposed development. Given the estimated number of people the development would draw to the mountain, we can assume somewhere in the nature of 30,000 more cars traveling on the Sandia Crest Highway. Most of these cars will be ICE SUVs and Trucks.

In the Spring, Summer, and Fall especially, the highway is already quite busy. Anyone who lives near the highway can attest to the booming noise from motorcycles and muscle cars that reverberate in the canyons and can be heard for miles. What is the impact of this noise on flora and fauna, and on the ecosystem more broadly? We must consider also the speeding and reckless driving. I know several of my neighborhoods who live off the highway who avoid leaving their houses on weekends out of fear of having to make dangerous left turns on a twisting road packed with cars going over twice the (already high) speed limit. I have experienced very aggressive and dangerous drivers myself. Bernalillo Police acknowledge these problems but simply says they lack the resources to enforce safe driving on the highways. I dare say that the noise from the highway and dangerous drivers already detract from the joys of living in Sandia Park. I can't stomach what the estimated increase in traffic will do to ecosystem, not to mention how it will detract from the quality of life of the residents who live near the highway.

In addition to noise pollution and an unsafe highway that is poorly designed to serve so much traffic, the emissions from climbing cars should concern us all. This is a fragile environment, and we risk sacrificing it in the name of economic opportunity. I certainly understand the economic arguments. It is true that many of the businesses on HW 14 could benefit from increased traffic. Yet this is short-sighted economic development that risks further distressing the very natural resource that we count on.

If this development proceeds, I hope we can at least implement a safety corridor with substantially reduced speeds in the first couple miles of the highway where residents live. The corridor should extend at least from the community mailboxes near Crest Road to Doc Long. (Such a corridor should exist even without the development.) This might alleviate some (though not all) of the concerns about safety and noise pollution. It would not address the many other detrimental environmental consequences of the project.

I strongly oppose the project and will continue to work to mobilize local residents against it.