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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Mr. Robert Grosvenor

Minerals Administrator / AML Coordinator

Mr. Craig Jones

Gentlemen,

My family owns a 25-acre parcel on the East Boulder River that is currently occupied by our mother, Shirley. We have legitimate concerns about the mine expansion and the safety of those who live below this proposed expansion. I ask that you please address our questions below, thank you very much.

The fact that they want to enlarge the already expanded holding pond seems to be a bit excessive and dangerous. They have just completed an expansion and now want to layer another expansion on top of that. It seems to me if they are concerned about expanding their capacity that "dry stacking" should be the considered alternative rather than expanding an already expanded holding pond that could if a breach or failure occurred be catastrophic versus dry stacking which would from an environmental standpoint alleviate a majority of our concerns. Is this alternative being seriously considered by those in key positions of the federal, state, and county government agency's as well as the mine? Please address these questions for me, thank you.

We have been living with a construction project to expand the pond which we thought was finally near completion. Now they want to start all over again, why? Why do they need to expand the current operations? This publicly traded company that owns the mine is doing quite well, I would think a long-term sustainable plan, abet more costly with dry stacking, would ensure their mining future in Montana for many years to come. The costs, spread out over additional years of mining production, would seem a win/win proposition. So please let me know why they need such a rapid expansion please?

Why is "dry stacking" not being mentioned? If it is a concern of cost, I believe by the public records available show that the mining company is very profitable business and could readily afford incorporating this new technology. I am assuming they are utilizing the latest available technology to convince you all that there are more deposits available than originally permitted for, correct? We all have heard the horror stories of these ponds breaching and would hate to have that happened here. The impact on life in this part of the country would be irrevocably changed and no amount of money could restore it. The implications would be felt for 100's of miles downstream. Dare I say a breach of this current massive holding pond and the additional expansion proposed, this close to the headwaters of the Yellowstone River would be felt for 100's if not 1000's of miles. Where would you stop the massive amount of pollution that would be created? Based on current models I have seen produced by the powers that be, a 16-foot wall of toxic waste starting on the East Boulder River, how would you contain a breach?

This would obviously create economic devastation for the state of Montana and the neighboring states that are a part of the Yellowstone River watershed. Your decisions would affect tourism, agriculture, ranching, farming, a whole way of life unique to our area of this beautiful nation, not to mention again the loss of life for those who live within the kill zone. This could affect the Missouri and the Mississippi rivers as well. Are all the residences and businesses, ranches, farms, and local governments and citizens being made aware of your considerations upstream? If so, could you please provide correspondence showing that cities and towns are aware of what is happening upstream from them on the East Boulder River? Towns such as Billings, Forsyth, Miles City Sidney, Williston, ND also towns on the Bighorn, Tongue, and Powder Rivers including Worland and Thermopolis,

Broadus and Gillette all in Wyoming and all would be affected by what happens on the east Boulder River? I look forward to seeing the materials you have shared directly with these communities, thank you. As you know this is not just a local issue.

Aside from the environmental aspect I speak of, what about the way of life for those closely affected? What does this expansion mean to traffic and noise pollution? We have lived in sync with the mine for years and have appreciated their busing of workers to and from town for their shifts, the limiting of the supply and load trucks, please note these started as a single bus and now we have 4 buses each way per shift. Supply and load trucks have increased along with the buses, when is enough, enough? Can you please share your environmental impact studies concerning these changes please? It should be noted we chose to live in the country for a reason. Yes, the mine has been here for years, but it keeps growing and so that most recent explanation is moot at this point. It is not the same mine when we moved here in 2002.

Also, the East Boulder Road is not in great shape currently. Several areas are in dire need of fill and increased volume will only exasperate this need. How will the risk be mitigated of hauling a much larger volume of dangerous/toxic substances down our roads? Please share with me your environmental impact studies concerning increased traffic

How many more workers will need to be transported daily? Will this project be 24/7/365 causing traffic issues all year? What is the response time if a truck hauling hazardous materials crashes on the road? Crashes into the river? Is there adequate materials and teams on site to handle these situations? I would like to see your impact studies and time of response studies for accidents along the east Boulder Road and main Boulder Road into Big Timber please. Thank you. I hope these reports have response times and equipment such as dams and materials for stopping the spread and the collection of materials such as fuels, oils, and toxic waste materials and how they would be carried to and from the mine when an accident occurs, as we all know it is not a matter of if, but when. Thank you for providing these important studies and reports.

Please help me understand the reason for this expansion at this time. Is it for more jobs? If so, how many long-term mining jobs will be created? How many project jobs? How long are these project jobs for? What is the pay? Benefit's? I am thinking you have studies and reports you can share addressing my concerns, thank you.

Where will these folks live? Can they live affordably? Do you have information/studies on these important issues you can share?

What is the increased tax base the county and state? How much more income is garnered by the county? State? Federal Government? Local Chamber of Commerce? Please share these reports and studies.

Would they close the mine operations if this additional expansion were denied?

Why bigger and why now? What is the big rush? Please answer this very important question for me please. They have not even filled the new pond and they want more, how do we know the new pond was constructed properly? Do you have soil and stress tests you can share with those of us who live downstream? Are they following all the protocols that were a part of their previous expansion requested? I would appreciate a copy of those studies and reports, including soil sample and stress test reports please? Thank you

Do you have an impact report concerning how this expansion will effect the fish and wildlife on the East Boulder River, Main Boulder River? Yellowstone River? I request a copy of these studies please. Many of us migrated to this beautiful area because of the tremendous beauty and wildlife, for the hunting and fishing. Will this massive expansion coexist with nature? With the increased noise, traffic, land being repurposed, how are we as property owners assured that our interests are being looked after? Up to this point it has been all about the mine, so I ask

how are you intending we balance the scales? Local landowners versus powerful, big money, publicly traded corporation. How are you, the authorities in control, the decision makers, going to insure both sides are treated fairly? And can coexist?

How long will the mine be open? What happens when it closes? Who will be responsible for the reclamation if the current operator goes out of business? Or goes back to their home country? I would hate to see happen here what happened in Butte Montana and their mining town after the boom faded. How much are the County/State/Federal Government entities setting aside for this area, this project? I would like to see your reports and studies showing what happens after the closure please.

How much insurance does the mining company hold? One building in Florida collapsed and the settlement 1-year later was \$1B? What insurance are you requiring and for how long?

Lastly sirs, what will they be asking for next?

I look forward to your responses, studies and reports, to all the questions I have asked you to consider, thank you.

Sincerely,

William & Lisa MacNamara
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McLeod, Montana