

Hingtgen, Robert J

To: Bennett, Jim
Subject: RE: proposal for sand mining in El Monte Valley

From: pansyannie@aol.com [<mailto:pansyannie@aol.com>]

Sent: Monday, September 14, 2015 12:15 PM

To: Bennett, Jim

Subject: proposal for sand mining in El Monte Valley

Planning and Development Services

Reference:

PDS2015-MUP-98-014W2, PDS2015-RP-15-001, LOG NO. PDS2015-ER-98-14-016B

Attention Jim Bennett

5510 Overland Ave. Suite 310

San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Mr. Bennett,

I am writing to offer my thoughts and ideas about the scope and nature of the environmental impacts that can and will be caused by the El Monte Valley Sand Mining Project. I ask that these concerns be thoroughly considered in the preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement.

1. One of my biggest concerns regards the aquifer, which I understand is one of the largest in San Diego County. At the present time, the water and the sand work together to maintain the San Diego River, which is underground in the El Monte Valley for much of the year. The sand helps to "hold" the water in the aquifer. If the sand is removed by sand mining, then what will help "hold" the water? Much of the aquifer will be lost. How can we justify the loss of most of this aquifer in dry, southern California, especially during this time of severe drought? How can the sand mining operation replace the loss of this precious water? The damage to the aquifer will be irreversible. The damage to the aquifer will affect the rest of the San Diego River between Lakeside and the ocean.

a. Not only will removing the sand cause water to be lost as described above, but the sand mining process will itself use copious amounts of water in the course of operating equipment and removing the sand. How can we justify the use of huge quantities of water for sand mining, when humans, wildlife, and vegetation are thirsty for water, especially during this time of severe drought? How can the sand mining company replace the loss of this water?

b. More problems will occur because the water will be exposed when sand miners open the center of the valley and expose the water underneath. Standing water will be lost to evaporation. Standing water will be exposed to contamination. Standing water will become a breeding ground for mosquitoes that are carriers for West Nile virus, which exists in this area. How does the sand mining company propose to address these problems caused by standing water? How will contaminated water be cleaned?

c. The loss of water in the aquifer will have an adverse effect on the wells of residents in the El Monte Valley. How will the sand mining company address these adverse effects, which may include the loss of the wells and/or the contamination of the wells of residents?

d. The loss of most of the aquifer will cause the entire El Monte Valley to become drier, which will increase the fire danger in the valley. How will the sand mining company mitigate the effects of a drier environment that will have a greater risk of fire?

2. Another one of my biggest concerns regards the plants and wildlife in the El Monte Valley. I would like to see all of the plants and wildlife identified and studied. What effect will the sand mining project have on the breeding and nesting of birds in the area?

What effect will the sand mining project have on the breeding and life cycle of riparian inhabitants in the area? mammals? insects? bats? How will the sand mining project impact threatened, endangered, and/or sensitive species? Will it be possible to mitigate these effects, or will species be lost forever to this valley?

3. Mining sand in the El Monte Valley will cause huge amounts of sand dust to be windborne, in spite of any efforts to water down the area. The sand in El Monte Valley contains Valley Fever, a fungus that could be spread by the wind, exposing humans and animals (both domestic and wild) to this illness, in areas even beyond Lakeside. Will the sand mining project set up a fund to be held in reserve to address the medical needs of people and animals that become ill with Valley Fever?

4. Greenhouse gas emissions are another major concern. These emissions will come from the heavy equipment working the sand operation, as well as from numerous trucks going back and forth 10 hours a day, in and out of the valley. Will these greenhouse gases remain in the valley where they will have an effect on all things (people, plants and animals) living in the valley! Will the gases be dispersed? In any case, they will contribute to global warming. How will these greenhouse gas emissions be measured and monitored? How will they be mitigated?

5. El Monte Valley is a designated visual corridor and popular recreational destination. How will these features of the valley be impacted by sand mining?

6. How will important soil organisms in El Monte Valley be impacted by sand mining in the valley?

7. El Monte Valley is an important wildlife corridor. How will sand mining impact the movement of wildlife in the valley?

I request that an entirely new Environmental Impact Report be done regarding the El Monte Valley. I understand that there was an EIR done for the golf club project, but I think that at this time a completely new EIR needs to be completed. This is an entirely new project.

WATER IN THE AQUIFER IS MORE VALUABLE THAN SAND. WATER SUSTAINS LIFE.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Ann Sullivan

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