

Hingtgen, Robert J

To: Bennett, Jim
Subject: RE: Please Don't Allow Strip Sand Mining in El Monte Valley!

From: Betsy Gopinath [<mailto:betsy.gopinath@gmail.com>]
Sent: Monday, September 14, 2015 3:34 AM
To: Bennett, Jim
Cc: Horn, Bill; Roberts, Dave; diane.jacob@sdcounty.ca.gov; Cox, Greg; Roberts, Ron; Fitzpatrick, Lisa
Subject: Please Don't Allow Strip Sand Mining in El Monte Valley!

Dear Mr. Bennett, Ms. Fitzpatrick, and Members of the Board of Supervisors,

My name is Betsy Gopinath. I live at 10289 El Capitan Real Road in El Cajon, CA 92021. I am writing to you about the proposed sand mining of the El Monte Valley (Planning and Development Services Reference: PDS2015-MUP-98-014W2, PDS2015-RP-15-001, LOG NO. PDS2015-ER-98-14-016B).

Specifically, I'm writing to express my opposition to the project. The El Monte Valley has recently become very important to me because it is the home of a therapeutic horse riding facility where my young son, who has been diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, is taking lessons. In the short time that he's been taking lessons he's made incredible progress with sequencing tasks and following directions. The progress is having a ripple effect throughout our lives.

We chose the ranch our son is riding at for a number of reasons, including its location in the El Monte Valley. The valley is quiet and when you are at the ranch you feel protected by the mountains that surround you. That peace allows the horses to be relaxed and, in turn, allows the children to learn to care for and connect with these amazing animals.

If the sand mining project is allowed to go forward it will devastate this beautiful California valley and dry up, or worse contaminate, the only source of water that feeds those that live and work in the valley. As you are well aware there is too little water running through the veins of our beautiful state. The proposed plan would allow the developers to gain access to what little water there is so that it could be used for washing sand and dust control. How this could sound remotely logical is beyond me. Restated the proposal suggests taking water from the residents (who have no other source) to wash the sand of a private company. The very suggestion is a disgrace.

Even if there was a way to preserve the water for the residents and somehow ensure that it would not be contaminated (which of course, no one could ever promise), usurping the water isn't the only issue. The traffic would increase dramatically - over 200 trucks would go in and out of the valley every single day. With those trucks comes pollution and noise and this area that was not built for such traffic will age faster than it is supposed to. This alone will destroy the ability for most of the businesses that are animal based in the valley to survive. It will certainly destroy the safe haven of learning that has started to hand us the keys to unlock my sons progress.

It's shameful that the sand mining company has donned a name that presents them as stewards of the land when their aim and purpose is profit. They say that they'll restore the land but that is impossible. They will take what they want, make millions, devastate the land and its inhabitants, and in their wake will be a generic park. The fact is that El Monte Valley is one of California's gems with a diverse and thriving ecosystem and should be preserved as it is.

Please do not allow "El Monte Nature Preserve LLC" to take the beating heart of this valley for their own enrichment. Please do the right thing and put a stop to this project. Protect San Diego County and protect the people that live and work and grow and thrive here. Protect it for my three year old son. He needs this place and he needs you. Thank you.

Regards,

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Betsy Gopinath, J.D.
betsy.gopinath@gmail.com