

May 25, 2022



**CROOK COUNTY**  
**JUN 08 2022**  
**PLANNING DEPT**

To the Crook County Court,

This letter is in response to the appeal by Knife River concerning the Vanier Property pit.

While there is no doubt as to the County listing this sight as a Goal 5 inventory of significant mineral and aggregate site, the planning commission was correct to deny the permit according to conditional use 18.160.020 (2).

The location of this mine will have significant adverse impact on the livability of the properties surrounding it. Neighboring Crook County residences purchased their rural properties years before the Woodward mine and the possible Vanier Mine were even considered. The livability has been impacted since the Woodward mine was permitted. Just visit the Mikulski residence during operating hours of the mine. Property values? Who would buy a house literally across the fence from an open pit mine?

We had applied for and received a CUP to build our retirement home on the adjoining 160 acres north of the Vanier property. We thought we were good to go as the Woodward mine was going to be finished and theoretically reclaimed. Great! Our beautiful rural property could be quiet, clean and serene once again. Within a month of paying the fee and starting the process of building we find out, that an open pit mine was going to be less than 250 yards from our front door, much closer to the barn and shop. After that gut punch, we will not be building. What would have been a high value property became property adjacent to a loud, dusty and possibly, operated for decades, open pit. (Exhibit 5)

The three new wells that Knife River plans on drilling could consume up to 500 gallons per minute, pumping for hours. (Exhibit 67) Potentially pumping millions of gallons of water out of the aquifer that nearby CC residences are using for their domestic water supply. OWRD application review states that the ground water (shallow wells) and the deeper aquifer (deep wells) could be connected by the drilling of KR industrial wells. (Exhibit 67) Knife River may offer a "water guarantee" but how can they guarantee they will not deplete this aquifer and cause CC citizens to have to drill their wells deeper? How many months will it take for a well driller to arrive and deepen or drill a new well? What are citizens to do in the meantime? Cases of bottled water are not going to cut it. KR's guarantee says if they caused the problem, they would fix it. But the burden of proof will be on us, the neighbors, to hire the lawyers and prove that KR was the cause. If we can prove to KR's satisfaction, or courts satisfaction, they caused the problem how long would it be before we would be reimbursed for what could be a major bill? How does KR guarantee that reclaimed mining cells, with their less permeable soil is going to permit the historic flow of ground water? When the big corporation has collected the profits and left, we the citizens, are left to deal with the aftermath.

KR uses water from OID. How much have they used so far? We are severely limited on water for our crops this year. (Exhibit 67) What is KR going to do when they have used up their allotment? Drill more wells? KR stated that the three new wells will be used for "supplemental" water. If this drought persists and our water allotment continues to drop, they will "supplement" more water from the deep aquifer. Possibly jeopardizing many domestic wells around the mine.

We are in a drought. For how long? No one knows. So many questions, no definite answers. This mine is in the wrong location. Causing potential harm, decreasing the quality of rural life and loss of property values to too many people.

Sincerely,

Monique Davis