

Zephyr confident all concerns will be addressed

By Will Felderhof
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Zephyr Minerals Ltd. wishes to communicate to the citizens of Cañon City and Fremont County that the opposition to its proposed underground gold mine being actively promoted by the Royal Gorge Preservation Project is unwarranted and not in the best interests of the community.

This media attack on Zephyr is without foundation and very general in nature as the RGPP simply doesn't have any solid technical information to support their opposition to Zephyr's project. Zephyr is highly confident that all of the concerns listed in the RGPP letter will be satisfactorily addressed in the mining permit application being prepared for submittal in Q2 of this year.

This isn't the first time RGPP has brought up the issue of fire concern, which is an attempt to scare the citizens into believing Zephyr's activities could cause wildfires as experienced in the region in 2020. Zephyr and its predecessor companies have been actively exploring the region since 1978 and in that period not a single fire resulted from these activities. Can RGPP point to any hard rock mining company in the USA that has been held responsible for starting a fire? Most fires are because of lightning strikes and fire risk primarily lies with careless campers and hikers.

RGPP raises the concern of Zephyr's impact on city and county roads without any information whatsoever to ascertain what that impact may be. The mining permit application to be submit-

ted to the county and state will address matters pertaining to Zephyr's vehicular traffic, which will be fully transparent and available to the citizens to scrutinize and comment on.

Similarly, the accusation of 'tumultuous effects' on wildlife, plants and watershed are totally without foundation and will be addressed in the mining application. This information will also be available to the citizens for comment.

With regards to the RGPP statement that Zephyr's objective is to build and operate a mine for commercial profit is absolutely correct. That is the objective of anyone wishing to start a business. However, characterizing this endeavor as taking place in a special (implied) wilderness area is incorrect.

The proposed mine site is not much different than the Dawson Ranch area prior to its development and now home to a number of RGPP proponents.

The proposed underground mine is entirely on private lands, more than a mile from Dawson Ranch and visually blocked by a prominent north-south trending ridge.

It is important to note that the development contemplated by Zephyr must be undertaken in strict compliance with all State and County environmental regulations and requirements and with an approved reclamation plan backed by a surety bond the amount of which is determined and held by the State.

Zephyr wholeheartedly agrees with RGPP's statement that the citizens should educate themselves regarding the impact of the proposed under-

ground mine. Zephyr is highly confident that the citizens will, after examining the information presented in the mining application, find that the many accusations presently being made against Zephyr by RGPP are totally unwarranted. No doubt the citizens will have questions, and Zephyr welcomes them as we have nothing to hide.

Zephyr maintains that RGPP's opposition to its project is totally without foundation and unmerited. If the regulators, with the community's support, approve the issuance of a mining permit for the Dawson Gold Mine, we believe this will be a positive event for Cañon City and Fremont County. The current proposal envisages employing approximately up to 90 individuals. Government studies have shown that for every direct job created, up to 4 indirect jobs can also be created. Thus, a net possible gain in the order of 300 new jobs. When in full operation the mine would spend \$15 – 20 million annually on labor, fuel, electricity, contractor services, industrial support, etc. in the area. Clearly, this would be welcomed by many.

Zephyr has received and continues to receive applications by young people for employment in this venture. Let's give young people in Fremont County another opportunity to stay and work here at skilled high-paying jobs. Zephyr recognizes the importance of the tourist industry in the area and we believe strongly that we can work in harmony alongside this industry.

Zephyr seeks and appreciates your support for its proposed underground mine.