

Dawson Ranch HOA offers rebuttal to Zephyr Minerals' editorial

Citizens of Cañon City and Fremont County:

Tuesday afternoon on its website and in Wednesday morning's printed edition, the Cañon City Daily record published an opinion article written by Mr. Felderhof of Zephyr Minerals. In that opinion, he stated:

"I challenge the HOA sign at the Tanner Parkway entrance (in the city ROW) stating 86% oppose Zephyr. Data on the HOA website indicates that of 560 property owners, 292 (52%) did not respond to the survey. Of the responses, 14% did not oppose Zephyr. Therefore, statistics indicate that 68% of the property owners in Dawson Ranch do not oppose Zephyr. The HOA's posted sign blatantly and intentionally misrepresents the survey results."

Challenge accepted. The accusations and faulty statistics stated in his opinion should not be tolerated by citizens or public officials.

The survey results are published and available to the public via the Dawson Ranch HOA website (dawsonranch-hoa.com). On the home page, simply click the "Zephyr" graphic to be taken to the published survey results. You should judge for yourselves whether Mr. Felderhof's claims are based on any real statistics. We encourage all readers to also analyze the list of events that prompted the HOA Board to initiate a survey of 490 property owners (found in the section labeled "HOA's position on mining activities").

The following is a list of problems with Mr. Felderhof's false accusations and fake use of statistics:

— The lead sentence of our survey results reads: "In the HOA survey, 86%

The following table of objective, statistically accurate, facts summarizes the survey results:

	Total	Aware Yes	Aware No	Oppose	Support	Undecided
Number Responses:	268	223	45	231	22	15
Percentages	54.7%	83.2%	16.8%	86.2%	8.2%	5.6%

Dawson Ranch HOA Graphic /

of 268 respondents are opposed to mining activities in the area." The sign is an accurate representation of the 86% respondents. Mr. Felderhof's statement of "blatantly and intentionally misrepresents the survey results" is 100% false and not based on any objective data.

— 560 property owners were NOT surveyed. Approximately 490 distinct owners were surveyed.

— No link was included in Mr. Felderhof's article to the HOA website. Was Mr. Felderhof thinking that a link may have encouraged people to read the objective facts?

— The survey had a 55% response ratio. A typical response rate is about 33%, therefore a much higher than average response rate indicates that a lot of property owners feel strongly about exploration/mining activities.

— In fact, 45% of the property owners did not respond (or 221 property owners). The only statistically correct conclusion from this is that 45% of the property owners do not care enough about Zephyr activities and/or the HOA to respond. One can make no statistically correct conclusions about the non-respondents' perspective on exploration or mining activities.

— While it is true that 14% of the respondents did not oppose the activities, there is no statistical evidence that

"indicate that 68% of the property owners in Dawson Ranch do not oppose Zephyr." This statement is a pure fabrication from inappropriate calculations.

Among many, two concerns alone should stop Zephyr's exploration in the Grape Creek area:

Last week's YMCA Fire demonstrated how dry the vegetation is in our region. A lightning strike resulted in over 300 acres being burned that would have been much worse if not for the prompt action by firefighters. The Grape Creek area is much more heavily forested. A spark from a helicopter, generator, drill rig, water pump, or a cigarette butt could set off a huge fire. Who will pay to have it extinguished? How will it be prevented? What are the preparations? How will the environment ever recover?

Grape Creek water levels are already low. Go, look. Pumping between 1 and 3 acre-feet (300,000 -900,000 gallons) of water from it will likely devastate fish populations and pristine vegetation bordering the stream.

Please contact the state-run Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (DRMS) at tim.cazier@state.co.us and your County Commissioners at Commissioners_Office@fremontco.com and implore them to halt this high-risk venture before it begins.

Dawson Ranch HOA Board,
dawsonhoa@gmail.com