



## COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE

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C. H. HUCKELBERRY  
County Administrator

December 8, 2006

Patrick Madigan  
Tucson Field Office Manager  
Bureau of Land Management  
12661 East Broadway  
Tucson, Arizona 85748

Re: **Arizona Portland Cement Company Draft Mining Plan of Operations for State Trust Land Along Davidson Canyon**

Dear Mr. Madigan:

It is my understanding that Arizona Portland Cement Company has submitted to your office a draft mining plan of operations for mining claims covering 60 acres of State Trust land along Davidson Canyon. These mining claims are located adjacent and to the north of leases the State Land Commissioner has decided to grant to California Portland Cement, subject to 18 key conditions that Pima County will continue to participate in developing. Pima County has spent two years actively opposing the State leases, and is now appealing the decision by the State Land Commissioner to award the leases.

Please be advised that Pima County will be submitting detailed comments on the draft plan of operations for the 60 acres of mineral claims managed by BLM. In the meantime, our general concerns regarding mining in this sensitive and unique riparian area include:

1. **Water Quality Degradation** - Davidson Canyon is a nominated Unique Waters of the State of Arizona and a rare perennial stream. Studies show that it contains high water quality, which provides habitat for endangered and vulnerable frog and fish species, and sustains rare riparian vegetation. Davidson Canyon also provides high quality flows to Cienega Creek, a Unique Waters of the State of Arizona, that by itself has lower quality water before it's confluence with Davidson Canyon. Both provide groundwater to the Tucson Basin.
2. **Reclamation** - Too many times the legacy of mining has not been adequately accounted for during the permitting process, and bonds posted do not cover the necessary reclamation, or reclamation never seems to occur since the projects are continued indefinitely. This is

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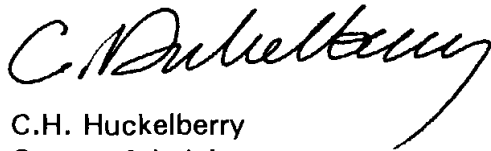
not acceptable to Pima County and should not be acceptable to land managers like the Bureau of Land Management. Concurrent reclamation should be mandatory, meaningful and enforceable.

3. **Other Major Issues** - Dust control, invasive species, transportation safety issues and visual impacts are also concerns that will be detailed in our comments to the draft plan of operations.

Unlike the State Land Department's mineral lease process, it is my understanding that the Bureau of Land Management is required to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. Since this is a major Federal action that will have a significant impact on the environment, Pima County will insist on the development of a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as opposed to just an Environmental Assessment (EA). Pima County is more than willing to provide constructive input during this process.

In summary, Davidson Canyon is a unique asset to Southern Arizona. As you know, riparian areas such as this are becoming more and more rare, having been lost or destroyed by this and similar activities. Riparian areas in Arizona provide habitat for as much as 80 percent of our species. A thorough analysis of the impacts on these proposed mining activities is necessary to determine whether these impacts would unduly harm or degrade this important public land.

Sincerely,



C.H. Huckelberry  
County Administrator

CHH/jj

- c: The Honorable Congressman Raúl Grijalva  
The Honorable Congresswoman-Elect Gabrielle Giffords  
The Honorable Chair and Members, Pima County Board of Supervisors  
Elaine Zielinski, State Director, Bureau of Land Management