

## LUPC Proposed Mining Rule Revisions – Talking Points

### **Consider Water Quality**

The most serious threat posed by open pit mineral mines is harm to water quality in surrounding aquifers and surface waters, but, under the proposed mining rules LUPC would not consider water quality at all.

LUPC needs information about groundwater in order to consider impacts on drinking water sources for homes and businesses downstream, and the likelihood of groundwater mixing with lakes, streams and wetlands, affecting fish and wildlife habitat.

It is critical that the new rule retain the requirement in the existing rule for the applicant to submit:

“(i) A description of groundwater characteristics which delineates flow rates and travel direction of the groundwater for the property proposed for D-PD Development Subdistrict designation.”

### **Ensure Soil Suitability**

To ensure that there are suitable soils on the site for the type of activity proposed, LURC has routinely required soils maps for rezoning for large developments. But under the proposed mining rules, soil maps would also not be reviewed by LUPC, despite the fact that mining activities involve many developments and soils maps are available from the NRCS at no cost.

It is critical that the proposed mining rule is revised to retain the requirement in the existing rule for the applicant to submit:

“(g) A soils map of high intensity or equivalent that encompasses those portions of the property proposed for D-PD Development Subdistrict designation, including identification of soils used in the USDA Soils Series.”

### **Protect Natural Resource Protection Zones**

LURC has routinely required applicants proposing large developments to provide substantially equivalent protection for natural resources within existing “protection zones” but LUPC’s proposed rules fail to ensure these same natural resource protections.

It is critical that the proposed rule is revised to maintain or increase the level of protection for sensitive natural areas within “protection zones” such as wetlands, shore lands, deeryards and other wildlife habitat, aquifers, and high mountain areas, and any impacts should be avoided. If negative impacts on these resources are unavoidable, the impacts should first be minimized, and then mitigation measures should be required.

### **Review Natural and Scenic Resources within Eight Miles**

The proposed rule would only require natural and scenic resources within three miles of the proposed mine and associated facilities to be identified by the applicant, even though wind power rules appropriately require maps showing impacts within an eight-mile radius.

Impacts of an open pit mine, particularly any that might be proposed on mountains, will affect resources and uses much further than three miles, including downstream rivers, streams and lakes, scenic vistas and recreation areas.

Like current wind power rules, the proposed mining rules should require maps showing impacts within an eight-mile radius.