

Public Record Submission

To: Summit County Planning Department and Lower Blue Planning Commission

From: Steve Taggart, [REDACTED]

Date: July 25, 2026

Subject: Public Comment in Opposition to Quikrete's Pending Conditional Use Permit Extension – Case PLN26-004

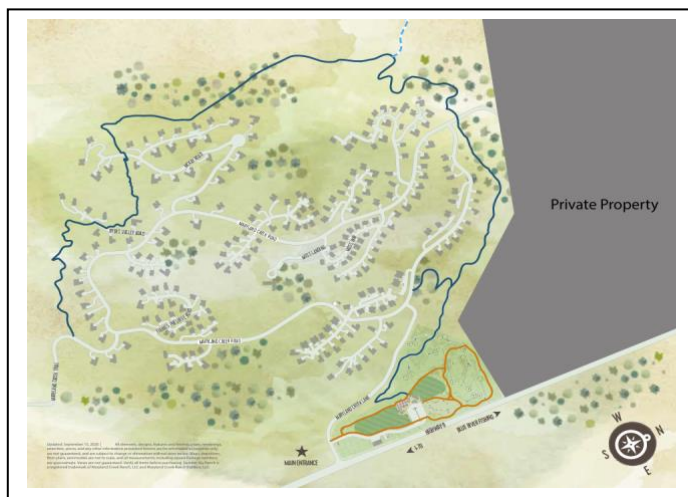
I am a resident of Summit County, and I ask that my input be placed into the public record in opposition to Quikrete's pending Conditional Use Permit (CUP) extension, Case PLN26-04. I am a chemical engineer, having worked in the refining and chemical operations divisions for a major oil corporation, and have direct experience with the environmental and community issues caused by industrial operations, including PM10/PM2.5 air emissions, groundwater emissions, and noise pollution.

I have outlined the reasons for my opposition below and ask that the Planning Department and the Lower Blue Planning Commission reject the permit extension in its entirety.

- **Significant Community**

Growth: The surrounding community has changed drastically since the 2016 CUP issuance. A new neighborhood of 240 homes, a new 20-acre park (Maryland Creek Park) which includes a dog park, a 9-hole disc golf course, a picnic pavilion, a sledding hill, two multi-use fields for soccer, etc., a public hiking trail, and a lake

(Lake Everist) used by the residents of Summit Sky Ranch are now nearby. The growth of Silverthorne has abutted the mine location, primarily because residents expected the mine operations to cease in 2026. The visual impact, as well as the dust, noise, and pollutants from nearby operations, affects well over 500 Summit County residents in a given month. This industrial visual footprint was never intended to be permanent (pictures attached, taken 7/24/2026). An overview map, taken from the Town of Silverthorne webpage, shows all the new infrastructure created since 2016.



- **Breach of Original Land Use Expectations:** The 2016 permit was presented to the community as a temporary, 10-year operation expiring in 2026. Extending this operating permit, along with Quikrete's stated intention of increasing the import of offsite material, will extend the life of the mining operation and create a permanent regional batch operation for asphalt and concrete. This breaks the original land use expectations promised to surrounding landowners and the county as a whole.
- **Industrial Acceleration Masked as a Continuation:** The failure to establish a new mine north of the current location spurred the former owners (Peak Materials), and now the current owners (Quikrete), to identify means to extend the life of the Maryland Creek asset. The importing of offsite materials accelerated, which allowed the extension of the gravel mining operation because the local source was not being depleted. Despite the assertion that Quikrete intends to honor the provisions of the 2016 CUP, this is not a continuation of "business as usual." The 2016 permit intended to wind down operations by 2026. Essentially, the requested permit is the establishment of two whole, permanent, continuous industrial businesses masked by the terms of the 2016 CUP: concrete and asphalt recycling.

This assertion was confirmed during the recent visit of Eric Leigh, manager of Quikrete's Acquisition and Development division, with representatives of Friends of Lower Blue River in a July, 2026 discussion, where Eric outlined the ultimate plan was to have an asphalt recycling plant and a Redi-mix manufacturing site that imports gravel and sand from other locations after the local mining operations ceased. The latter is expressly forbidden as a condition of the 2016 CUP and should be considered evidence of Quikrete's plans for the Maryland Creek asset, longer-term, despite the 2026 CUP language. The Commission cannot allow for 'scope creep' regarding operating conditions for this asset.

- **Active Delay of Legal Reclamation Obligations:** Under the Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety (DRMS) Construction Materials Rules, specifically Rule 3.1.1 (Establishing Post-Mining Use) and concurrent reclamation mandates, operators are bound to a strict, approved reclamation schedule to return affected lands to a beneficial end-use. By shifting their business model to importing offsite material for regional recycling, Quikrete is leaving local aggregate reserves unmined as a pretext to bypass these timelines. This operational pivot constitutes an intentional, artificial delay of their legal obligation under state law to reclaim the Maryland Creek asset back to its promised "natural ranch-like state."

- **Incompatible Zoning for the Valley:** The valley enclosed by the Gore Range on one side and the Williams Fork Range on the other is home to no other significant industrial operations. This incompatibility was recognized 40 years ago, which is why the 2016 CUP included a provision for sunseting the mining operations in 2026. As mentioned above, the proposed extension redefines the operation by increasing



the use of imported recycled materials, thereby minimizing local gravel extraction and prolonging the industrial footprint.

Further, the local community continues to be concerned that a permanent batch operating facility may negatively affect nearby long-term residential property values through the associated industrial activity, truck traffic, noise, dust, visual impacts, and the perception of environmental risk. These socioeconomic impacts have not been independently verified using the current community area composition, however reasonable expectations would assume an overall negative bias.

- **Contradictory Developer Promises:** Homebuyers in the Summit Sky Ranch neighborhood were explicitly informed during the purchase process that mining operations would cease by 2026. They were promised that the mine ownership would address nuisance and health issues via remediation back to a natural, ranch-like state featuring lakes and native plants. Notably, the landowner and lease-provider for the acreage occupied by Quikrete is the very same developer that built the Summit Sky Ranch neighborhood.
- **History of Direct Regulatory Noncompliance:** The successive owners of the mining operation—Everist Materials, Peak Materials, and now Quikrete—have consistently failed to live up to local and state environmental mandates, as well as conditions outlined in the 2016 CUP. Specific ongoing violations include:

- **Odor, Particulates, and Water Quality:** Locating asphalt piles near Lake Everist, causing frequent odor and particulate events. The accumulation of black industrial dust on the frozen surface of Lake Everist during winter points to a failure of their dust emission mitigation practices as well as potentially a failure of their state-mandated Stormwater Management Plan under Colorado state Stormwater Discharge Permit regulations.

It should be noted that the recycled asphalt pavement pile located next to Lake Everist has not been independently characterized through representative environmental testing, and its potential to release contaminants to air, soil, groundwater, or nearby surface waters has not been established. Until that characterization is completed, the material should be regarded as a potential environmental concern rather than assumed to be either safe or hazardous. This alone should merit a pause of the approval process for the CUP.

- **Air Quality and Dust Mitigation:** A lack of dust mitigation on interior roadways and the storage of unmitigated soil/asphalt stockpiles for greater than 45 days. This stands in direct violation of the fugitive dust control expectations set by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Air Quality Control Commission Regulation 1.
- **Visual Buffering and Property Line Storage:** Storing industrial equipment on the edge of the property line and failing to install required landscaping to blunt the visual impact of operations. This breaches the strict development standards outlined in Section 3505 of the *Summit County Land Use and Development Code*.
- **Lighting Violations:** Operating outdoor lighting that is not fully Dark Sky compliant, violating local rural character protections.
- **Grading Deviations:** Failing to construct the "undulating" lake shorelines legally mandated by the original permit criteria.

Additionally, it is apparent that the Quickete corporation suffers from a history of environmental penalties and fines over the past 15 years, assessed by Virginia, Missouri, Oregon and Federal EPA – these violations center on air pollution and water emissions; this shows a track record of misoperation and noncompliance.

In 2024 and 2025, during meetings with Summit Sky Ranch Homeowners Association to discuss concerns with dust, lighting, traffic, noise, and location of equipment nearby Everist Lake, the predecessor management of the asset that

Quickrete now owns made promises to mitigate the issues to be ‘a good neighbor’ – none of these complaints were self-reported to Summit County.

- **Imprudent Extension Terms:** It is clear that the Summit County Planning Department originally intended for a bi-annual review of operations to ensure strict compliance. Given the issues identified above—some of which have been out of compliance for well over eight years—considering a 15-year extension for Quikrete, who are brand-new operators to this site with a track record of environmental violations, is completely imprudent. It fails to meet the basic criteria of Section 3800 (Conditional Use Permit Standards) of the Summit County Land Use Code, which protects residential zones from undue environmental degradation and odor. Ultimately, this fails to meet the basic expectations of the residents of Summit County.

I believe a thorough review of the items summarized above will support the denial of the continued use permit conditions and lead the Summit County Planning Department and Lower Blue Planning Commission to recommend the rejection of the Quickrete PLN26-004 application.

Sincerely,

Steve Taggart