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**Ninth Circuit Green-lights Imminent Destruction of Thacker Pass**

RENO, Nev. – The Ninth Circuit court today [refused to stop the ecological destruction](#) at the Thacker Pass Lithium Mine, allowing the bulldozers to roll pending its review of the environmental justice and conservation groups' appeal of the District of Nevada decision from earlier this month. The [emergency motion filed](#) Monday sought to prevent the permanent destruction of sage grouse habitat and cultural sites while the appeal could be decided.

“It’s a truly unfortunate outcome for the land, wildlife, and cultural resources of this area,” said Talasi Brooks, staff attorney with Western Watersheds Project. “This massive open pit mine has been fast-tracked from start to finish in defiance of environmental laws, all in the name of ‘green energy,’ but its environmental impacts will be permanent and severe.”

“Thacker Pass lithium mining will deal a major blow to a critical Sage-grouse population. BLM’s rushed mine approval exposed that it continues to treat the West’s irreplaceable sagebrush wild lands and cultural landscapes as sacrifice zones to industry. It’s absurd for officials to greenwash this dirty lithium mine. We’ll continue working to expose the ecological travesty taking place,” said Katie Fite of WildLands Defense.

“It is a disappointment to see valuable biological, cultural and visual resources sacrificed for a stripmine that has been greenwashed to be good for the environment,” said Kevin Emmerich, co-founder of Basin and Range Watch. “In reality, the mine will impact Great Basin wildlife and hydrology for centuries or more. We will not see any kind of recovery of this region in our lifetime.”

“By the time our general appeal to the Ninth Circuit is heard, irreversible damage to the environmentally and culturally sensitive area known as Thacker Pass will have occurred unnecessarily, if only a stay on the mine had been ordered,” said John Hadder, Director of Great Basin Resource Watch. “I fear that we are moving to a period of unaccountable mining with our future generations to pay the price, and wonder why we didn’t take the time now to carefully and legally scrutinize mining proposals like Thacker Pass.”

Earlier this month, environmental justice and conservation groups prevailed in Nevada District Court when the court ruled that the Bureau of Land Management broke the law in approving the

mine, but the judge chose not to block development of the enormous open pit mine despite the unlawful decision.

The Ninth Circuit did set an expedited schedule and will hear the appeal in June.