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## Rise Gold Is Responsible For Ongoing Idaho-Maryland Mine Pollution

Currently, contaminated water containing unsafe levels of Arsenic, Lead, Barium, Chromium, and other hazardous metals is continuously draining out of the Idaho-Maryland Mine into Wolf Creek, in violation of the Clean Water Act. A recent op-ed in the Union by David Watkinson, the former CEO of Emgold Mining Co, criticized the efforts by CEA Foundation to compel Rise Gold to get a Discharge Permit (NPDES), the first step in remediating the problem. (see [“TheUnion.com Nov 9 2024 Ideas & Opinions David Watkinson”](#) )

The Watkinson op-ed contained numerous invalid statements. For example, Watkinson states “The action may well be moot because the discharge from the mine does not occur on property owned by Rise.” In fact, as is well documented in the mine’s own hydrology studies, the discharge comes from the Idaho-Maryland Mine. And, as the holder of the mineral rights, Rise is responsible. This is almost identical to the situation with the Magenta Drain at Memorial Park. The owner of the mineral rights in that case was Newmont Co., a real mining company. Newmont was found liable for the pollution even though the surface property was owned by others.

Watkinson also insinuated that CEA, or CEA’s predecessor CLAIM, has known about the ongoing pollution since 2008 and only took action now to hurt Rise financially. In fact, CEA learned of the pollution from the 2020 Hydrology study for Rise’s draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR), and promptly submitted comments identifying that the draft EIR failed to adequately address this polluting effluent. However, Rise completely ignored these comments and continued to incorrectly characterize the mine’s water quality. This is one of many reasons why the final EIR was not certified by Nevada County.

Watkinson then laments that Rise lacks the financial resources to build and maintain a water treatment plant, suggesting that, due to CEA’s actions, the “cleanup costs will be borne by government agencies funded by taxes and also by local residents and businesses who happen to own the mineral rights under their properties, not by Rise.” This is blatant scaremongering. Rise may wish that property owners in the area would have to pay for the cleanup, but the liability rests with Rise.

Rise has also withdrawn from their Voluntary Agreement with the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to clean up the 56 acre Centennial Site, which may cause the EPA to resume classification of the site under the super-fund program. A significant amount of resources have been used by Rise to prepare a draft Final Remedial Action Plan (RAP). The next step was to make final revisions so that the RAP can be accepted by the DTSC, a key step towards getting the site cleaned up. But instead of completing that milestone, Rise has directed its funds and energy into futile lawsuits against Nevada County. Unless the cleanup is completed, the land has little value. Apparently, Rise intends to abandon the Centennial property.

Rise’s financial problems are basically self-inflicted, in large part due to the fact that Rise is suing Nevada County over the County’s denial of Rise’s “vested right to mine” claim and Use Permit application. The vested rights claim is particularly ludicrous, as a vested right requires that the mine has

been operating continuously. But the Idaho-Maryland Mine shut down in 1956 and has not been mined since. Additionally, in an illogical self-defeating action, presumably to raise more money for those lawsuits, Rise has listed its “Lumber Mill Site” properties along Brunswick Road for sale. If Rise sells the land, then even with a vested rights or Use Permit victory, Rise would still not be able to go forward with their mine project, which requires the Lumber Mill Site lands for the processing facilities.

I wonder if the investors in this corporation even know what is going on? Watkinson suggests that Rise may go bankrupt and, laughably, that CEA’s action to require a NPDES Discharge Permit is the cause, and yet Rise seems to remain in a state of denial, obsessed with improbable lawsuits. It seems that what Watkinson is really hoping for is that the community will allow Rise to walk away from its ongoing pollution responsibilities while it funds salaries and expensive lawyers in their endless legal pursuits.

CEA’s position is clear: Rise should begin fulfilling its responsibilities under the Clean Water Act, and get a Discharge Permit, and stop polluting our precious water.

Thank you,  
Ralph Silberstein, President  
CEA Foundation

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