



Businesses Urge County Supervisors to Reject Mine Proposal

CEA Foundation
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Contacts:

Traci Sheehan
Community Environmental Advocates Foundation
traci@cea-nc.org

Businesses urge County Supervisors to reject Mine proposal 150 local business leaders sign on to letter

Grass Valley, CA – 150 business leaders from Nevada County submitted a letter to the Nevada County Board of Supervisors. The letter includes businesses located in downtown Grass Valley and from diverse sectors in the County including tourism, agriculture, and real estate. In addition, nearly 100 business owners also signed a petition to the Board of Supervisors, for a total of 250 businesses opposed to re-opening the mine.

The long-shuttered Idaho Maryland Mine is proposed to be re-opened by Rise Gold Corp – a company headquartered in Canada. A Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was released in January. In response, many hundreds of comments were submitted by citizens to the County expressing serious concerns about the risks of the mine and the inadequacy of the report. The County Board of Supervisors could consider this issue as early as 2023 after a Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) is issued.

The letter states:

“Mining is our past, not our future. During the past 50 years, Nevada County has worked diligently to attract people and investments that contribute to and renew its economic vitality

through promising and sustainable enterprises which align with the aspirations of its residents. That is what continues to make this County an attractive place to live, to make a living, and to start new business ventures.”

Residents and businesses have expressed concerns about the potential economic impacts of the mine, including impact on tourism, property values, and tax revenue, and high-tech companies.

Many businesses offered quotes expressing their opposition to the Mine. “This mine is on track to have a potentially significant impact on our regional flora and fauna, water quality, and even local culture,” stated Fable Coffee. “Rise Gold’s ethical practices are questionable; we simply do not know enough to say this is safe – but we know enough to say that this community is not ready to open Idaho-Maryland Mine. There are better, more innovative, and more regionally respectful ways to enhance our economy.”

Nevada County’s agricultural sector is growing. With over 350 farms, tourists flock to farmers markets, and local farm-to-fork restaurants to experience fresh food grown by local farmers and prepared by local chefs.

“Grass Valley and Nevada County are known for our local farms and businesses,” said Mike Pasner, Owner of Indian Springs Organic Farms. “We need to invest in our already existing sustainable businesses.”

Nevada County was once the epicenter for gold mining. The big mines shut down in the 1950s, and mining is now less than ½% of the local economy. The County, particularly Grass Valley, is now considered a scenic and cultural destination.

Residents contend that the few jobs that might be gained are offset by big risks to tourism, high-tech businesses, private wells, and 10’s of millions lost in property values.

“Real estate values and the quality of life in Nevada County will suffer permanent and irreparable harm if the mine is allowed to operate,” stated Charles Brock, Real Estate Broker. “I have read the Draft EIR for this proposed project, and there are many unanswered and unmitigable issues which, in my opinion, will destroy the fabric of life as we know it in Nevada County.”

The letter outlined key economic points and concerns, including:

The County could do better by continuing to invest in existing industries and new enterprises that address current priorities in the Sierra, like watershed and forest management.

Other industries can produce far better economic growth numbers than mining, including eight industries Nevada County already has today.

An economic study commissioned by the City of Grass Valley during Emgold's attempt to re-open the Idaho-Maryland Mine in 2008 concluded that Nevada County would be better off economically if it pursued other opportunities than mining.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) was released in January and while it is not required to include an analysis of the economic impacts, Nevada County has commissioned an independent economic impact report. The letter also urged the County to include consideration of a non-Mine alternative in their Economic Study. Because the DEIR will most likely have to be recirculated, the study is expected to be released after potential changes in the project description have been assessed.

The public can view pictures of several businesses opposed to the Mine on the website www.MineWatchNC.org or on the MineWatchNC Instagram account at [minewatchnc](https://www.instagram.com/minewatchnc)

For more information about the potential re-opening of the Idaho-Maryland Mine visit: www.MineWatchNC.org

About CEA Foundation: Community Environmental Advocates Foundation (CEA Foundation) performs research, education, and advocacy to promote responsible land use and environmental protection policies in Nevada County. CEA Foundation is the sponsor of MineWatch, a campaign that brings together a coalition of nonprofit organizations, residents, and businesses opposed to the mine.